MARRIAGE.

C. Stewart, Printer, Edinburgh.

[illegible] · 1829

MARRIAGE,

A NOVEL.

'Life consists not of a series of illustrious actions; the greater part of our time passes in compliance with necessities—in the performance of daily duties—in the removal of small inconveniencies—in the procurement of petty pleasures; and we are well or ill at ease, as the main stream of life glides on smoothly, or is ruffled by small and frequent interruption.'

Johnson.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

SECOND EDITION.

VOL. III.

EDINBURGH:
WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, PRINCE'S-STREET;
AND JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET, LONDON.

1819.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

MARRIAGE.

CHAPTER I.

"Les douleurs muettes et stupides sont hors d'usage; on pleure, on récite, on répète, on est si touchée de la mort de son mari, qu'on n'en oublie pas la moindre circonstance."

LA BRUYERE.

"PRAY put on your Lennox face this morning, Mary," said Lady Emily one day to her cousin, "for I want you to go and pay a funereal visit with me to a distant relation, but unhappily a near neighbour of ours, who has lately lost her husband. Lady Juliana and Adelaide ought to go, but they won't, so you and I must celebrate, as we

best can, the obsequies of the Honourable Mr. Sufton"

Mary readily assented; and when they were seated in the carriage, her cousin began—

"Since I am going to put you in the way of a trap, I think it but fair to warn you of it. All traps are odious things, and I make it my business to expose them whereever I find them. I own it chafes my spirit to see even sensible people taken in by the clumsy machinery of such a woman as Lady Matilda Sufton. So here she is in her true colours. Lady Matilda is descended from the ancient and illustrious family of Altamont. To have a fair character is, in her eyes, much more important than to deserve it. She has prepared speeches for every occasion; and she expects they are all to be believed—she has studied attitudes, and imagines they are to pass for *impromptu* feelings—in short, she is a *shew* woman—the world is her

theatre, and from it she looks for the plaudits due to her virtue—for with her, the reality and the semblance are synonimous. She has a grave and imposing air which keeps the timid at a distance; and she delivers the most common truths as if they were the most profound aphorisms. To degrade herself is her greatest fear; for, to use her own expression, there is nothing so degrading as associating with our inferiors—that is, our inferiors in rank and wealth—for with her all other gradations are incomprehensible. With the lower orders of society she is totally unacquainted—she knows they are meanly clothed and coarsely fed—consequently they are mean. She is proud, both from nature and principle; for she thinks it is the duty of every woman of family to be proud, and that humility is only a virtue in the *canaille*. Proper pride she calls it, though I rather think it ought to be pride *proper*, as I imagine it is a distinction that was unknown before the

introduction of heraldry. The only true knowledge, according to her creed, is the knowledge of the world, by which she means a knowledge of the most courtly etiquette---the manners and habits of the great, and the newest fashions in dress. Ignoramuses might suppose she entered deeply into things, and was thoroughly acquainted with human nature---no such thing ---the only wisdom she possesses, like the owl, is the look of wisdom, and that is the very part of it which I detest. Passions or feelings she has none; and to love, she is an utter stranger. When, somewhat "in the sear and yellow leaf," she married Mr Sufton, a silly old man, who had been dead to the world for many years. But after having had him buried alive in his own chamber till his existence was forgot, she had him disinterred for the purpose of giving him a splendid burial in good earnest. That done, her duty is now to mourn, or appear to mourn, for the approbation of the

world. And now you shall judge for yourself, for here is Sufton-House. Now for the trappings and the weeds of woe."

Aware of her cousin's satirical turn, Mary was not disposed to yield conviction to her representation, but entered Lady Matilda's drawing-room with a mind sufficiently unbiassed to allow her to form her own judgment; but a very slight survey satisfied her that the picture was not overcharged. Lady Matilda sat in an attitude of woe---a crape-fan and open prayer-book lay before her---her cambric handkerchief was in her hand---her mourning-ring was upon her finger---and the tear, not unbidden, stood in her eye. On the same sofa, and side by side, sat a tall, awkward, vapid looking personage, whom she introduced as her brother, the Duke of Altamont. His Grace was flanked by an obsequious looking gentleman, who was slightly named, as General Carver; and at a respectful distance was seated a sort of half-cast gentle-

woman, something betwixt the confidential friend and humble companion, who was incidentally mentioned as "my good Mrs. Finch."

Her Ladyship pressed Lady Emily's hand—

"I did not expect, my dearest young friend, after the blow I have experienced —I did not expect I should so soon have been enabled to see my friends; but I have made a great exertion. Had I consulted my own feelings, indeed!—but there is a duty we owe to the world—there is an example we are all bound to shew—but such a blow!" Here she had recourse to her handerchief.

"Such a blow!" echoed the Duke.

"Such a blow!" re-echoed the General.

"Such a blow!" reverberated Mrs. Finch.

"The most doating husband! I may say he lived but in my sight. Such a man!"

"Such a man!" said the Duke.

"Such a man!" exclaimed the General.

"Oh! such a man!" sobbed Mrs. Finch. as she complacently dropped a few tears. At that moment, sacred to tender remembrance, the door opened, and Mrs. Downe Wright was announced. She entered the room as if she had come to profane the ashes of the dead, and insult the feelings of the living. A smile was upon her face; and, in place of the silent pressure, she shook her Ladyship heartily by the hand, as she expressed her pleasure at seeing her look so well.

"Well!" replied the Lady, "that is wonderful, after what I have suffered—but grief, it seems, will not kill!"

"I never thought it would," said Mrs. Downe Wright; "but I thought your having been confined to the house so long might have affected your looks. However, I'm happy to see that is not the case, as I

don't recollect ever to have seen you so fat."

Lady Matilda tried to look her into decency, but in vain. She sighed, and even groaned; but Mrs. Downe Wright would not be dolorous, and was not to be taken in, either by sigh or groan, crape-fan, or prayer-book. There was nobody her Ladyship stood so much in awe of as Mrs. Downe Wright. She had an instinctive knowledge that she knew her, and she felt her genius repressed by her, as Julius Cæsar's was by Cassius. They had been very old acquaintances, but never were cordial friends, though many worthy people are very apt to confound the two. Upon this occasion, Mrs. Downe Wright certainly did; for, availing herself of this privilege, she took off her cloak, and said, " 'tis so long since I have seen you, my dear; and since I see you so well, and able to enjoy the society of your friends, I shall delay the

rest of my visits, and spend the morning with you."

"That is truly kind of you, my dear Mrs. Downe Wright," returned the mourner, with a countenance in which real woe was now plainly depicted; "but I cannot be so selfish as to claim such a sacrifice from you."

"There is no sacrifice in the case, I assure you, my dear," returned Mrs. Downe Wright: "This is a most comfortable room; and I could go no where, that I would meet a pleasanter little circle," looking round.

Lady Matilda thought herself undone. Looking well--fat—comfortable room—pleasant circle—rung in her ears, and caused almost as great a whirl in her brain as noses, lips, handkerchiefs, did in Othello's. Mrs. Downe Wright, always disagreeable, was now perfectly insupportable. She had disconcerted all her plans—she was a bar to all her studied speeches—even an ob-

stacle to all her sentimental looks—yet to get rid of her was impossible. In fact, Mrs. Downe Wright was far from being an amiable woman. She took a malicious pleasure in tormenting those she did not like; and her skill in this art was so great, that she even deprived the tormented of the privilege of complaint. She had a great insight into character, and she might be said to read the very thoughts of her victims. Making a desperate effort to be herself again, Lady Matilda turned to her two young visitors, with whom she had still some hopes of success.

"I cannot express how much I feel indebted to the sympathy of my friends upon this trying occasion—an occasion, indeed, that called for sympathy."

"A most melancholy occasion!" said the Duke.

"A most distressing occasion!" exclaimed the General.

" Never was greater occasion !" moaned Mrs. Finch.

Her Ladyship wiped her eyes, and resumed—

" I feel that I act but a melancholy part, in spite of every exertion. But my kind friend, Mrs. Downe Wright's spirits will, I trust, support me. She knows what it is to lose—"

Again her voice was buried in her handkerchief, and again she recovered and proceeded—

" I ought to apologize for being thus overcome ; but my friends, I hope, will make due allowance for my situation. It cannot be expected that I should at all times find myself able for company."

" Not at all !" said the Duke ; and the two satellites uttered their responses.

" You are able for a great deal, my dear !" said the provoking Mrs. Downe Wright ; " and I have no doubt but, with

a very little exertion, you could behave as if nothing had happened."

"Your partiality makes you suppose me capable of a great deal more than I am equal to," answered her Ladyship, with a real hysteric sob. "It is not every one who is blessed with the spirits of Mrs. Downe Wright."

"What woman can do, you dare; who dares do more, is none!" said the General, bowing with a delighted air at this brilliant application.

Mrs. Downe Wright charitably allowed it to pass, as she thought it might be construed either as a compliment or a banter. Visitors flocked in, and the insufferable Mrs. Downe Wright declared to all, that her Ladyship was astonishingly well; but without the appropriate whine, which gives proper pathos, and generally accompanies this hackneyed speech. Mrs. Finch indeed laboured hard to counteract the effect of this injudicious cheerfulness, by the most

orthodox sighs, shakes of the head, and confidential whispers, in which 'wonderful woman!'—'prodigious exertion!'—'perfectly overcome!'—'suffer for this afterwards,'—were audibly heard by all present; but even then Mrs. Downe Wright's drawn up lip, and curled nose, spoke daggers. At length, the tormentor recollected an engagement she had made elsewhere, and took leave, promising to return, if possible, the following day. Her friend, in her own mind, took her measures accordingly. She resolved to order her own carriage to be in waiting, and if Mrs. Downe Wright put her threat in execution, she would take an airing. True, she had not intended to have been able for such an exertion for at least a week longer; but, with the blinds down, she thought it might have an interesting effect.

The enemy fairly gone, Lady Matilda seemed to feel like a person suddenly relieved from the night-mare; and she was

beginning to give a fair specimen of her scenic powers, when Lady Emily, seeing the game was up with Mrs. Downe Wright, abruptly rose to depart.

"This has been a trying scene for you, my sweet young friends!" said her Ladyship, taking a hand of each.

"It has indeed!" replied Lady Emily, in a tone so significant as made Mary start.

"I know it would—youth is always so full of sympathy. I own I have a preference for the society of my young friends on that account. My good Mrs. Finch, indeed, is an exception; but worthy Mrs. Downe Wright has been almost too much for me."

"She *is* too much!" said the Duke.

"She is a great deal too much!" said the General.

"She is a vast deal too much!" said Mrs. Finch.

"I own I have been rather overcome by her!" with a deep-drawn sigh, which her

visitors hastily availed themselves of to make their retreat. The Duke and the General handed Lady Emily and Mary to their carriage.

"You find my poor sister wonderfully composed," said the former.

"Charming woman, Lady Matilda!" ejaculated the latter; "her feelings do honour to her head and heart!"

Mary sprung into the carriage as quick as possible to be saved the embarrasment of a reply; and it was not till they were fairly out of sight, that she ventured to raise her eyes to her cousin's face. There the expression of ill humour and disgust was so strongly depicted, that she could not longer repress her risible emotions, but gave way to a violent fit of laughter.

"How!" exclaimed her companion, "is this the only effect 'Matilda's moan' has produced upon you? I expected your taste for grief would have been highly gratified by this affecting representation."

"My appetite, you ought rather to say," replied Mary; "taste implies some discrimination which you seem to deny me."

"Why, to tell you the truth, I do look upon you as a sort of intellectual goule—you really do remind me of the lady in the Arabian Nights, whose taste or appetite, which you will, led her to scorn every thing that did not savour of the church-yard."

"The delicacy of your comparison is highly flattering," said Mary; "but I must be duller than the fat weed, were I to give my sympathy to such as Lady Matilda Surface."

"Well, I'm glad to hear you say so; for I assure you, I was in pain lest you should have been taken in, notwithstanding my warning to say something *larmoyante*—or join the soft echo—or heave a sigh—or drop a tear—or do something, in short, that would have disgraced you with me for ever. At one time I must do you the justice to own, I thought I saw you with difficulty repress

a smile, and then you blushed so, for fear you had betrayed yourself! The smile I suppose has gained you one conquest—the blush another. How happy you, who can hit the various tastes so easily! Mrs. Downe Wright whispered me as she left the room, 'What a charming intelligent countenance your cousin has!' While my Lord Duke of Altamont observed, as he handed me along, 'What a very sweet modest looking girl, Miss Douglas was!' So take your choice—Mrs. William Downe Wright, or Duchess of Altamont!"

"Duchess of Altamont, to be sure," said Mary: "and then such a man! Oh! such a man!"

CHAPTER II.

> "For marriage is a matter of more worth
> Than to be dealt with in attorneyship."
> SHAKESPEARE.

"ALLOW me to introduce to you, ladies, that most high and puissant Princess, her Grace the Duchess of Altamont, Marchioness of Norwood, Countess of Penrose, Baroness of, &c. &c." cried Lady Emily, as she threw open the drawing-room door, and ushered Mary into the presence of her mother and sister, with all the demonstrations of ceremony and respect. The one frowned—the other coloured.

"How vastly absurd!" cried Lady Juliana, angrily.

"How vastly amusing!" cried Adelaide, contemptuously.

"How vastly annoying!" cried Lady Emily; "to think that this little Highlander should bear aloft the Ducal crown, while you and I, Adelaide, must sneak about in shabby straw bonnets," throwing down her own in pretended indignation. "Then to think, which is almost certain, of her Viceroying it some day; and you and I, and all of us, being presented to her Majesty—having the honour of her hand to kiss—retreating from the Royal presence upon our heels. Oh! ye Sylphs and Gnomes!" and she pretended to sink down overwhelmed with mortification.

Lady Emily delighted in tormenting her aunt and cousin, and she saw that she had completely succeeded. Mary was disliked by her mother, and despised by her sister; and any attempt to bring her forward, or

raise her to a level with themselves, never failed to excite the indignation of both. The consequences were always felt by her, in the increased ill humour and disdainful indifference with which she was treated; and, on the present occasion, her injudicious friend was only brewing phials of wrath for her. But Lady Emily never looked to future consequences—present effect was all she cared for; and she went on to relate seriously, as she called it, but in the most exaggerated terms, the admiration which the Duke had expressed for Mary, and her own firm belief that she might be Duchess when she chose; "that is, after the expiry of his mourning for the late Duchess. Every one knows that he is desirous of having a family, and is determined to marry the moment propriety permits—he is now decidedly on the look-out, for the year must be very near a close; and then, hail Duchess of Altamont!"

"I must desire, Lady Emily, you will find some other subject for your wit, and not fill the girl's head with folly and nonsense—there is a great deal too much of both there already."

"Take care what you say of the future representative of majesty; this may be high treason yet; only I trust your Grace will be as generous as Henry the Fifth was, and that the Duchess of Altamont will not remember the offences committed against Mary Douglas."

Lady Juliana, to whom a jest was an outrage, and raillery incomprehensible, now started up, and, as she passionately swept out of the room, threw down a stand of hyacinths, which, for the present, put a stop to Lady Emily's diversion.

The following day Mrs. Downe Wright arrived with her son, evidently primed for falling in love at first sight. He was a very handsome young man, gentle, and rather pleasing in his manners; and Mary, to

whom his intentions were not so palpable, thought him by no means deserving of the contempt her cousin had expressed for him.

"Well!" cried Lady Emily, after they were gone, "the plot begins to thicken—lovers begin to pour in, but all for Mary—how mortifying to you and me, Adelaide! At this rate, we shall have nothing to boast of in the way of disinterested attachment—nobody refused!—nothing renounced!—By and bye Edward will be reckoned a very good match for *me*, and *you* will be thought greatly married, if you succeed in securing Lindore: *poor* Lord Lindore, as it seems that wretch Placid calls him."

Adelaide heard all her cousin's taunts in silence, and with apparent coolness; but they rankled deep in a heart already festering with pride, envy, and ambition. The thoughts of her sister—and that sister so inferior to herself—attaining a more splendid alliance, was not to be endured.—True, she loved Lord Lindore, and ima-

gined herself beloved in return; but even that was not sufficient to satisfy the craving passions of a perverted mind. She did not, indeed, attach implicit belief to all that her cousin said on the subject; but she was provoked and irritated at the mere supposition of such a thing being possible; for it is not merely the jealous whose happiness is the sport of trifles light as air—every evil thought, every unamiable feeling, bears about with it the bane of that enjoyment after which it vainly aspires.

Mary felt the increasing ill humour which this subject drew upon her, without being able to penetrate the cause of it; but she saw that it was displeasing to her mother and sister, and that was sufficient to make her wish to put a stop to it. She, therefore, earnestly entreated Lady Emily to end the joke.

"Excuse me," replied her Ladyship, "I shall do no such thing. In the first place, there happens to be no joke in the matter:

I'm certain, seriously certain, or certainly serious, which you like, that you may be Duchess of Altamont, if you please. It could be no common admiration that prompted his Grace to an original and spontaneous effusion of it. I have met with him before, and never suspected that he had an innate idea in his head. I certainly never heard him utter any thing half so brilliant before —it seemed quite like the effect of inspiration."

"But I cannot conceive, even were it as you say, why my mother should be so displeased about it. She surely cannot suppose me so silly, as to be elated by the unmeaning admiration of any one, or so meanly aspiring as to marry a man I could not love, merely because he is a Duke: She was incapable of such a thing herself, she cannot then suspect me."

"It seems as impossible to make you enter into the characters of your mother and sister, as it would be to teach them to com-

prehend yours, and far be it from me to act as interpreter betwixt your understandings. If you can't even imagine such things as prejudice, narrow-mindedness, envy, hatred, and malice, your ignorance is bliss, and you had better remain in it. But you may take my word for one thing and that is, that 'tis a much wiser thing to resist tyranny, than to submit to it. Your patient Grizzles make nothing of it, except in little books: in real life they become perfect pack-horses, saddled with the whole offences of the family. Such will you become unless you pluck up spirit, and dash out. Marry the Duke, and drive over the necks of all your relations; that's my advice to you.."

"And you may rest assured, that when I follow your advice, it shall be in whole, not in part."

"Well, situated so detestably as you are, I rather think the best thing you could do, would be to make yourself Duchess of Al-

tamont. How disdainful you look! Come, tell me honestly now, would you really refuse to be Your Grace, with ninety thousand a year, and remain simple Mary Douglass, passing rich with perhaps forty?"

"Unquestionably," said Mary.

"What! you really pretend to say you would not marry the Duke of Altamont?" cried Lady Emily. "Not that I would take him myself; but as you and I, though the best of friends, differ widely in our sentiments on most subjects, I would really like to know how it happens that we coincide in this one. Very different reasons, I dare say, lead to the same conclusion; but I shall generously give you the advantage of hearing mine first. I shall say nothing of being engaged—I shall even banish that idea from my thoughts; but were I free as air—unloving and unloved—I would refuse the Duke of Altamont; first, because he is old—no, first, because he is stupid; second, because he is formal; third, because

he swallows all Lady Matilda's flummery; fourth, because he is more than double my age; fifth, because he is not handsome; and, to sum up the whole in the sixth, he wants that inimitable *Je ne sçais quoi*, which I consider as a necessary ingredient in the matrimonial cup. I shall not, in addition to these defects, dwell upon his unmeaning stare—his formal bow—his little senseless simper, &c. &c. &c. All these enormities, and many more of the same stamp, I shall pass by, as I have no doubt they had their due effect upon you as well as me; but then I am not like you, under the torments of Lady Juliana's authority: Were that the case, I should certainly think it a blessing to become Duchess of any body to-morrow."

"And can you really imagine," said Mary, "that for the sake of shaking off a parent's authority, I would impose upon myself chains still heavier, and even more binding? Can you suppose I would so far

forfeit my honour and truth, as that I would swear to love, honour, and obey, where I could feel neither love nor respect; and where cold constrained obedience would be all of my duty I could hope to fulfil?"

"Love?" exclaimed Lady Emily; "can I credit my ears? Love! did you say? I thought that had only been for naughty ones, such as me; and that saints like you would have married for any thing and every thing but love! Prudence, I thought, had been the word with you proper ladies—a prudent marriage! Come, confess, is not that the climax of virtue in the creed of your school?"

"I never learnt the creed of any school," said Mary, "nor ever heard any one's sentiments on the subject, except my dear Mrs. Douglas."

"Well, I should like to hear your oracle's opinion, if you can give it in short hand."

"She warned me there was a passion, which was very fashionable, and which I

should hear a great deal of, both in conversation and books, that was the result of indulged fancy, warm imaginations, and ill-regulated minds; that many had fallen into its snares, deceived by its glowing colours and alluring name; that——"

"A very good sermon, indeed!" interrupted Lady Emily; "but, no offence to Mrs. Douglas, I think I could preach a better myself. Love is a passion that has been much talked of, often described, and little understood. Cupid has many counterfeits going about the world, who pass very well with those whose minds are capable of passion, but not of love. These Birmingham Cupids have many votaries amongst boarding school misses, militia officers, and milliners' apprentices; who marry upon the mutual faith of blue eyes and scarlet coats: have dirty houses and squalling children, and hate each other most delectably. Then there is another species for more refined souls, which owes its birth to the works of

Rousseau, Goëthe, Cottin, &c.: its success depends very much upon rocks, woods, and waterfalls; and it generally ends in daggers, pistols, poison, or Doctor's Commons. But there, I think, Lindore would be more eloquent than me, so I shall leave it for him to discuss that chapter with you. But, to return to your own immediate concerns—Pray, are you then positively prohibited from falling in love? Did Mrs. Douglas only dress up a scarecrow to frighten you, or had she the candour to shew you Love himself in all his majesty?"

"She told me," said Mary, "that there was a love which even the wisest and most virtuous need not blush to entertain—the love of a virtuous object, founded upon esteem, and heightened by similarity of tastes, and sympathy of feelings, into a pure and devoted attachment: unless I feel all this, I shall never fancy myself in love."

"Humph! I can't say much as to the similarity of tastes and sympathy of souls,

between the Duke and you, but surely you might contrive to feel some love and esteem for a coronet and ninety thousand a year."

"Suppose I did," said Mary, with a smile, "the next point is to honour; and surely he is as unlikely to excite that sentiment as the other. Honour—"

"I can't have a second sermon upon honour. 'Can honour take away the grief of a wound?' as Falstaff says. Love is the only subject I care to preach about; though, unlike many young ladies, we can talk about other things too; but as to this Duke, *I* certainly 'had rather live on cheese and garlic, in a windmill far, than feed on cates, and have him talk to me in any summer-house in Christendom;' and now I have had Mrs. Douglas' second hand sentiments upon the subject—I should like to hear your own."

"I have never thought much upon the subject," said Mary; "my sentiments are

therefore all at second hand, but I shall repeat to you what I think is *not* love, and what *is*."—And she repeated these pretty and well known lines :

CARELESS AND FAITHFUL LOVE.

To sigh—yet feel no pain—
To weep—yet scarce know why,
To sport an hour with beauty's chain,
Then throw it idly by :
To kneel at many a shrine,
Yet lay the heart on none ;
To think all other charms divine,
But those we just have won :—
This is love—careless love—
Such as kindleth hearts that rove.

To keep one sacred flame
Through life, unchill'd, unmov'd ;
To love in wint'ry age the same
That first in youth we loved :
To feel that we adore
With such refined excess,
That though the heart would break with more,
We could not love with less.—
This is love—faithful love,
Such as saints might feel above.

"And such as I do feel, and will always feel, for my Edward," said Lady Emily—"But there is the dressing bell!" And she flew off, singing,

"To keep one sacred flame, &c.

CHAPTER III.

"Some, when they write to their friends, are all affection; some are wise and sententious; some strain their powers for efforts of gaiety; some write news, and some write secrets—but to make a letter without affection, without wisdom, without gaiety, without news, and without a secret, is doubtless the great epistolic art."

Dr. Johnson.

An unusual length of time had elapsed since Mary had heard from Glenfern, and she was beginning to feel some anxiety on account of her friends there, when her apprehensions were dispelled by the arrival of a large packet, containing letters from Mrs. Douglas and aunt Jacky. The for-

mer, although the one that conveyed the greatest degree of pleasure, was perhaps not the one that would be most acceptable to the reader. Indeed, it is generally admitted, that the letters of single ladies are infinitely more lively and entertaining than those of married ones—a fact which can neither be denied nor accounted for. The following is a faithful transcript from the original letter in question.

"*Glenfern Castle, ——shire, N.B.*
Feb. 19*th*, 18—.

"MY DEAR MARY,

YOURS was *received* with *much* pleasure, as it is *always* a satisfaction to your friends *here* to know that you are *well* and doing *well*. We all *take* the most *sincere* interest in your *health*, and also in your *improvements* in other *respects*. But I am *sorry* to say they do not quite *keep* pace with *our* expectations. I must therefore *take* this opportunity of *mentioning* to you a *fault* of yours, *which*,

though a very great *one* in itself, is one *that* a very slight *degree* of attention on your *part*, will, I have *no* doubt, enable you to *get* entirely the *better of*. It is fortunate for *you*, my dear Mary, that you have *friends* who are always ready to point *out* your errors to you. For *want* of that *most* invaluable *blessing*, viz. a sincere *friend*, many a *one* has gone out of the *world*, no wiser in many *respects*, than when they *came* into it. But that, I flatter *myself*, will not be your *case*, as you cannot *but* be sensible of the great *pains* my sister and I have *taken* to point out your *faults* to you from the hour of your birth. The *one* to which I particularly *allude* at present is, the constant omission of *proper* dates to your *letters*, by which means we are all of us very often *brought* into *most* unpleasant *situations*. As an *instance* of it, our *worthy* minister, Mr. M'Drone, happened to be *calling* here the very *day* we received your last *letter*. After *hearing* it read, he most *naturally* inquired

the date of it; and I *cannot* tell you how *awkward* we all *felt* when we were *obliged* to confess it had *none!* And since I am *upon* that subject, I think it much *better* to tell you candidly that I *do* not think your *hand* of write by any *means* improved. It does not *look* as if you *bestowed* that pains upon it which you *undoubtedly* ought to do; for without *pains*, I can assure you, Mary, you *will* never do any *thing* well. As our admirable *grandmother*, good Lady Girnachgowl, *used* to say, pains *makes* gains; and so it was *seen* upon her; for it was entirely *owing* to her *pains* that the Girnachgowl estate was relieved, and *came* to be what it is now, viz. a most valuable and *highly* productive *property*.

I know there are *many* young *people* who are very *apt* to think it *beneath* them to take *pains;* but I sincerely trust, my dear Mary, you have *more* sense than to be so very *foolish*. Next to a good distinct *hand* of write, and *proper* stops (which I

observe you never *put*) the thing *most* to be attended to is your style, *which* we all think might *be* greatly *improved* by a *little* reflection on your *part*, joined to a *few* judicious *hints* from your friends. We are *all* of opinion, that your *periods* are too short, and also *that* your expressions are *deficient* in dignity. *Neither* are you sufficiently circumstantial in your *intelligence*, even upon subjects of the highest *importance*. Indeed, upon some *subjects*, you *communicate* no information whatever, which is *certainly* very extraordinary in a *young* person, who ought to be naturally extremely communicative. Miss M'Pry, who is here upon a *visit* to us at *present*, is perfectly *astonished* at the total *want* of news in your *letters*. She has a *niece* residing in the neighbourhood of *Bath*, who sends her regular lists of the company there, and also an *account* of the most *remarkable* events that take *place* there. Indeed, had it not been for Patty M'Pry, we never would have *heard* a *syllable* of

the celebrated *Lady* Travers' elopement with *Sir* John Conquest; and, indeed I cannot *conceal* from you, that we have heard more as to what goes on in Lord Courtland's *family*, through Miss Patty M'Pry, than *ever* we have heard from you, *Mary*.

In short, I *must* plainly tell you, *however* painful you may *feel* it, that not one of us is ever a *whit* the wiser after reading your *letters* than we *were* before. But I am *sorry* to say this is not the *most* serious part of the *complaint* we have to *make* against you. We are all *willing* to find excuses for you, even *upon* these points, but I must *confess*, your neglecting to *return* any answers to certain inquiries of your aunt's *appears* to me perfectly inexcusable. Of *course*, you must *understand* that I allude to that *letter* of your aunt Grizzy's, dated the 17th of December, wherein she *expressed* a strong desire that you should endeavour to make yourself *mistress* of Dr Redgill's opinion with *respect* to lumbago, as she is extreme-

ly anxious to *know* whether he *considers* the seat of the disorder to be in the bones or the sinews; and undoubtedly it is of the greatest *consequence* to procure the *opinion* of a sensible well-informed English *physician*, upon a subject of such vital *importance*. Your aunt Nicky, also, in a letter, *dated* the 22d of December, requested to be *informed* whether Lord Courtland (like our *great* landholders) killed his own *mutton*, as Miss P. M'P. insinuates in a *letter* to her aunt, that the *servants* there are suspected of being *guilty* of great *abuses* on that *score*; but there you also *preserve* a most unbecoming, and I own I think *somewhat* mysterious *silence*.

And now, my dear Mary, *having* said all that *I* trust is necessary to *recal* you to a sense of *your* duty, I *shall* now communicate to you a *piece* of intelligence, *which*, I am certain, will *occasion* you the *most* unfeigned pleasure, viz. the prospect there is of your soon

beholding some of your friends from this *quarter* in Bath. Our valuable friend and *neighbour*, Sir Sampson has been rather (we think) worse than *better* since you left us. He is now *deprived* of the entire use of one leg. He *himself* calls his *complaint* a morbid rheumatism; but Lady Maclaughlan *assures* us it is a rheumatic palsy, and she has now *formed* the resolution of *taking* him *up* to Bath early in the ensuing *spring*. And not only that, but she has most considerately *invited* your aunt Grizzy to accompany them, *which*, of course, she is to do with the greatest *pleasure*. We are therefore all extremely *occupied* in getting your aunt's things *put* in order for such an *occasion*; and you must *accept* of that as an apology for none of the girls *being* at leisure to write *you* at present, and *likewise* for the shortness of *this* letter. But be assured we will all *write* you fully by Grizzy. Meantime, all *unite* in kind remembrance to *you*. And

I *am*, my dear Mary, your most affectionate aunt,

JOAN DOUGLAS."

"P.S. Upon *looking* over your letter, I am much *struck* with your X's. You surely *cannot* be so ignorant as *not* to know that a well *made x* is neither more nor *less* than *two c*'s joined together back to back, *instead* of these senseless crosses you *seem* so fond of; and as to *your z*'s, I defy any *one* to distinguish them *from* your *y*'s. I trust you will *attend* to this, and shew that it *proceeds* rather from want of proper *attention* than *from* wilful airs.

J. D."

"P.S. Miss P. M'Pry *writes* her aunt that *there* is a strong *report* of Lord Lindore's marriage to our *niece* Adelaide; but *we* think that is *impossible*, as you certainly *never* could have omitted to *inform* us of a circumstance *which* so deeply concerns

us. If so, I must *own* I shall think you quite *unpardonable.* At the *same* time, it *appears* extremely improbable *that* Miss M'P. *would* have mentioned *such* a thing to her *aunt,* without having good *grounds* to *go* upon.

J. D."

Mary could not entirely repress her mirth while she read this catalogue of her crimes; but she was, at the same time, eager to expiate her offences, real or imaginary, in the sight of her good old aunt; and she immediately sat down to the construction of a letter after the model prescribed;—though with little expectation of being able to cope with the intelligent Miss P. M'P. in the extent of her communications. Her heart warmed at the thoughts of seeing again the dear familiar face of aunt Grizzy, and of hearing the tones of that voice, which, though sharp and cracked, still sounded sweet in memory's ear. Such is

the power that early associations ever retain over the kind and unsophisticated heart. But she was aware how differently her mother would feel on the subject, as she never alluded to her husband's family, but with indignation or contempt; and she therefore resolved to be silent with regard to aunt Grizzy's prospects for the present.

CHAPTER III.

——————" As in apothecaries' shops all sorts of drugs are permitted to be, so may all sorts of books be in the library; and as they out of vipers, and scorpions, and poisonous vegetables, extract often wholesome medicaments for the life of mankind, so out of whatsoever book, good instruction and examples may be acquired."

Drummond *of Hawthornden.*

Mary's thoughts had often reverted to Rose Hall since the day she had last quitted it, and she longed to fulfil her promise to her venerable friend; but a feeling of delicacy, unknown to herself, withheld her. " She will not miss me while she has her son with her," said she to herself; but, in reality, she dreaded her cousin's raillery

should she continue to visit there as frequently as before. At length a favourable opportunity occurred: Lady Emily, with great exultation, told her the Duke of Altamont was to dine at Beech Park the following day, but that she was to conceal it from Lady Juliana and Adelaide; "for assuredly," said she, "if they were apprised of it, they would send you up to the nursery as a naughty girl, or, perhaps, down to the scullery, and make a Cinderella of you. Depend upon it, you would not get leave to shew your face in the drawing-room?

"Do you really think so?" asked Mary.

"I know it. I know Lady Juliana would torment you till she had set you a crying; and then she would tell you, you had made yourself such a fright, that you were not fit to be seen, and so order you to your own room. You know very well it would not be the first time that such a thing has happened."

Mary could not deny the fact; but, sick of idle altercation, she resolved to say nothing, but walk over to Rose Hall the following morning. And this she did, leaving a note for her cousin, apologizing for her flight.

She was received with rapture by Mrs. Lennox.

"Ah! my dear Mary," said she, as she tenderly embraced her, "you know not, you cannot conceive, what a blank your absence makes in my life! When you open your eyes in the morning, it is to see the light of day, and the faces you love, and all is brightness around you. But, when I awake, it is still to darkness. My night knows no end. 'Tis only when I listen to your dear voice that I forget I am blind."

"I should not have staid so long from you," said Mary, "but I knew you had Colonel Lennox with you, and I could not

flatter myself you would have even a thought to bestow upon me."

"My Charles is, indeed, every thing that is kind and devoted to me. He walks with me, reads to me, talks to me, sits with me for hours, and bears with all my little weaknesses as a mother would with her sick child; but still there are a thousand little feminine attentions he cannot understand. I would not that he did. And then to have him always with me seems so selfish; for, gentle and tender-hearted as he is, I know he bears the spirit of an eagle within him; and the tame monotony of my life can ill accord with the nobler habits of his. Yet he says he is happy with me, and I try to make myself believe him."

"Indeed," said Mary, "I cannot doubt it. It is always a happiness to be with those we love, and whom we know love us, under any circumstances; and it is for that reason I love so much to come to my dear Mrs. Lennox," caressing her as she spoke.

"Dearest Mary, who would not love you? Oh! could I but see—could I but hope—"

"You must hope every thing you desire," said Mary, gaily, and little guessing the nature of her good friend's hopes; "I do nothing but hope." And she tried to check a sigh, as she thought how some of her best hopes had been already blighted by the unkindness of those whose love she had vainly strove to win.

Mrs. Lennox's hopes were already upon her lips, when the entrance of her son fortunately prevented their being for ever destroyed by a premature disclosure. He welcomed Mary with an appearance of the greatest pleasure, and looked so much happier and more animated than when she last saw him, that she was struck with the change, and began to think he might almost stand a comparison with his picture.

"You find me still here, Miss Douglas," said he, "although my mother gives me

many hints to be gone, by insinuating what, indeed, cannot be doubted, how very ill I supply your place; but," turning to his mother, "you are not likely to be rid of me for some time, as I have just received an additional leave of absence; but for that, I must have left you to-morrow."

"Dear Charles! you never told me so. How could you conceal it from me! how wretched I should have been had I dreamed of such a thing!"

"That is the very reason for which I concealed it, and yet you reproach me. Had I told you there was a chance of my going, you would assuredly have set it down for a certainty, and so have been vexed for no purpose."

"But your remaining was a chance too," said Mrs. Lennox, who could not all at once reconcile herself even to an *escape* from danger; "and think, had you been called away from me without any preparation!—Indeed, Charles, it was very imprudent."

"My dearest mother, I meant it in kindness: I could not bear to give you a moment's certain uneasiness for an uncertain evil. I really cannot discover either the use or the virtue of tormenting one's self by anticipation. I should think it quite as rational to case myself in a suit of mail, by way of security to my person, as to keep my mind perpetually on the rack of anticipating evil. I perfectly agree with that philosopher who says, if we confine ourselves to general reflections on the evils of life, *that* can have no effect in preparing us for them; and if we bring them home to us, *that* is the certain means of rendering ourselves miserable."

"But they will come, Charles," said his mother mournfully, "whether we bring them or not."

"True, my dear mother; but when misfortune does come, it comes commissioned from a higher power, and it will ever find a well-regulated mind ready to receive it with

reverence, and submit to it with resignation. There is something, too, in real sorrow, that tends to enlarge and exalt the soul; but the imaginary evils of our own creating, can only serve to contract and depress it."

Mrs. Lennox shook her head—"Ah! Charles, you may depend upon it your reasoning is wrong, and you will be convinced of it some day."

"I am convinced of it already. I begin to fear this discussion will frighten Miss Douglas away from us. *There* is an evil anticipated! Now, do you, my dear mother, help me to avert it; where that can be done, it cannot be too soon apprehended."

As Colonel Lennox's character unfolded itself, Mary saw much to admire in it; and it is more than probable the admiration would soon have been reciprocal, had it been allowed to take its course. But good Mrs. Lennox would force it into a thousand little channels prepared by herself, and love itself must have been quickly exhausted

by the perpetual demands that were made upon it. Mary would have been deeply mortified had she suspected the cause of her friend's solicitude to shew her off; but she was a stranger to match-making in all its bearings—had scarcely ever read a novel in her life, and was, consequently, not at all aware of the necessity there was for her falling in love with all convenient speed. She was, therefore, sometimes amused, though oftener ashamed, at Mrs Lennox's panegyrics, and could not but smile as she thought how aunt Jacky's wrath would have been kindled, had she heard the extravagant praises that were bestowed on her most trifling accomplishments.

"You must sing my favourite song to Charles, my love—he has never heard you sing. Pray do: you did not use to require any entreaty from me, Mary! Many a time you have gladdened my heart with your songs, when, but for you, it would have been filled with mournful thoughts!"

Mary finding, whatever she did or did *not*, she was destined to hear only her own praises, was glad to take refuge at the harp, to which she sung the following ancient ditty:—

"Sweet day! so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
Sweet dews shall weep thy fall to night,
For thou must die.

Sweet rose! whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave;
And thou must die.

Sweet spring! full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shews you have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like season'd timber, never gives;
But when the whole world turns to coal,
Then chiefly lives."

"That," said Colonel Lennox, "is one of the many exquisite little pieces of poetry which are to be found, like 'jewels in an Ethiop's ear,' in my favourite Isaac Walton.

The title of the book offers no encouragement to female readers, but I know few works from which I rise with such renovated feelings of benevolence and good-will. Indeed, I know no author who has given, with so much *naïveté*, so enchanting a picture of a pious and contented mind. Here," taking the book from a shelf, and turning over the leaves, " is one of the passages which has so often charmed me :—' That very hour which you were absent from me, I sat down under a willow by the waterside, and considered what you had told me of the owner of that pleasant meadow in which you left me—that he has a plentiful estate, and not a heart to think so; that he has at this time many law-suits depending—and that they both damped his mirth, and took up so much of his time and thoughts, that he himself had not leisure to take that sweet comfort, I, who pretended no title to them, took in his fields; for I could there sit quietly, and, looking in the water, see

some fishes sport themselves in the silver streams, others leaping at flies of several shapes and colours. Looking on the hills, I could behold them spotted with woods and groves; looking down upon the meadows, I could see, here a boy gathering lilies and lady-smocks, and there a girl cropping culverkeys and cowslips, all to make garlands suitable to this present month of May. These, and many other field-flowers, so perfumed the air, that I thought that very meadow like that field in Sicily, of which Diodorus speaks, where the perfumes arising from the place make all dogs that hunt in it to fall off and lose their scent. I say, as I thus sat joying in my own happy condition, and pitying this poor rich man, that owned this and many other pleasant groves and meadows about me, I did then thankfully remember what my Saviour said, that the *meek possess the earth*—or, rather, they enjoy what the others possess and enjoy not; for anglers and meek-spirited men

are free from those high, those restless thoughts, which corrode the sweets of life; and they, and they only, can say, as the poet has happily expressed it—

"Hail, blest estate of lowliness!
Happy enjoyments of such minds
As, rich in self-contentedness,
Can, like the reeds in roughest winds,
By yielding, make that blow but small,
By which proud oaks and cedars fall."

"There is both poetry and painting in such prose as this," said Mary; "but I should certainly as soon have thought of looking for a pearl necklace in a fish pond, as of finding pretty poetry in a treatise upon the art of angling."

"That book was a favourite of your father's, Charles," said Mrs. Lennox; "and I remember, in our happisst days, he used to read parts of it to me. One passage, in particular, made a strong impression upon me, though I little thought then it would ever apply to me. It is upon the blessings

of sight. Indulge me by reading it to me once again."

Colonel Lennox made an effort to conquer his feelings, while he read as follows:

"What would a blind man give to see the pleasant rivers, and meadows, and flowers, and fountains, that we have met with! I have been told, that if a man that was born blind could attain to have his sight for *but only one hour* during his whole life, and should, at the first opening of his eyes, fix his sight upon the sun when it was in its full glory, either at the rising or the setting, he would be so transported and amazed, and so admire the glory of it, that he would not willingly turn his eyes from that first ravishing object, to behold all the other various beauties this world could present to them. And this, and many other like objects, we enjoy daily———"

A deep sigh from Mrs. Lennox made her son look up: Her eyes were bathed in tears.

He threw his arms around her. "My dearest mother!" cried he, in a voice choked with agitation, "how cruel—how unthinking—thus to remind you ——"

"Do not reproach yourself for my weakness, dear Charles; but I was thinking, how much rather, could I have my sight but for one hour, I would look upon the face of my own child, than on all the glories of the creation!"

Colonel Lennox was too deeply affected to speak: He pressed his mother's hand to his lips—then rose abruptly, and quitted the room. Mary succeeded in soothing her weak and agitated spirits into composure; but the chord of feeling had been jarred, and all her efforts to restore it to its former tone, proved abortive for the rest of the day.

CHAPTER IV.

"Friendship is constant in all other things
Save in the office and affairs of love:
Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues;
Let every eye negociate for itself,
And trust no agent."
Much Ado about Nothing.

THERE was something so refreshing in the domestic peacefulness of Rose Hall, when contrasted with the heartless bustle of Beech Park, that Mary felt too happy in the change to be in any hurry to quit it. But an unfortunate discovery soon turned all her enjoyment into bitterness of heart; and Rose Hall, from being to her a place of rest, was

suddenly transformed into an abode too hateful to be endured.

It happened, one day as she entered the drawing-room, Mrs. Lennox was, as usual, assailing the heart of her son in her behalf. A large Indian screen divided the room, and Mary's entrance was neither seen nor heard till she was close by them.

" O, certainly, Miss Douglas is all that you say—very pretty—very amiable—and very accomplished," said Colonel Lennox, with a sort of half-suppressed yawn, in answer to an eulogium of his mother's.

" Then why not love her? Ah! Charles, promise me that you will at least try!" said the good old lady, laying her hand upon his with the greatest earnestness.

This was said when Mary was actually standing before her. To hear the words, and to feel their application, was as a flash of lightning; and, for a moment, she felt as if her brain were on fire. She was alive but to one idea, and that the most painful

that could be suggested to a delicate mind. She had heard herself recommended to the love of a man who was indifferent to her. Could there be such a humiliation—such a degradation? Colonel Lennox's embarrassment was scarcely less; but his mother saw not the mischief she had done, and she continued to speak without his having the power to interrupt her. But her words fell unheeded on Mary's ear—she could hear nothing but what she had already heard. Colonel Lennox rose and respectfully placed a chair for her, but the action was unnoticed—she saw only herself a suppliant for his love; and, insensible to every thing but her own feelings, she turned and hastily quitted the room without uttering a syllable. To fly from Rose Hall, never again to enter it, was her first resolution; yet how was she to do so without coming to an explanation, worse even than the cause itself; for she had that very morning yield-

ed to the solicitations of Mrs. Lennox, and consented to remain till the following day.

"Oh!" thought she, as the scalding tears of shame, for the first time, dropped from her eyes, "what a situation am I placed in! To continue to live under the same roof with the man whom I have heard solicited to love me; and how mean—how despicable must I appear in his eyes—thus offered—rejected! How shall I ever be able to convince him that I care not for his love—that I wished it not—that I would refuse, scorn it to-morrow were it offered to me. Oh! could I but tell him so; but he must ever remain a stranger to my real sentiments—*he* might reject—but *I* cannot disavow! And yet, to have him think, that I have all this while been laying snares for him—that all this parade of my acquirements was for the purpose of gaining his affections! Oh! how blind and stupid I was, not to see through the injudicious praises of Mrs. Lennox! I should not then

have suffered this degradation in the eyes of her son!"

Hours passed away unheeded by Mary, while she was giving way to the wounded sensibility of a naturally high spirit and acute feelings, thus violently excited in all their first ardour. At length, she was recalled to herself, by hearing the sound of a carriage, as it passed under her window; and, immediately after, she received a message to repair to the drawing-room to her cousin, Lady Emily.

"How fortunate!" thought she; "I shall now get away—no matter how or where, I shall go never again to return."

And, unconscious of the agitation visible in her countenance, she hastily descended, impatient to bid an eternal adieu to her once loved Rose Hall. She found Lady Emily and Colonel Lennox together. Eyes less penetrating than her cousin's, would easily have discovered the state of poor Mary's mind, as she entered the room; her

beating heart—her flushed cheek and averted eye, all declared the perturbation of her spirits ; and Lady Emily regarded her, for a moment, with an expression of surprise that served to heighten her confusion.

"I have no doubt, I am a very unwelcome visitor here to all parties," said she ; "for I come—how shall I declare it !—to carry you home, Mary, by command of Lady Juliana."

"No, no !" exclaimed Mary eagerly ; "you are quite welcome. I am quite ready. I was wishing—I was waiting."—Then, recollecting herself, she blushed still deeper at her own precipitation.

"There is no occasion to be so vehemently obedient," said her cousin ; "*I* am not quite ready, neither am I wishing, or waiting to be off in such a hurry. Colonel Lennox and I had just set about reviving an old acquaintance ; begun, I can't tell when—and broken off, when I was a thing in the nursery, with a blue sash and red

fingers. I have promised him, that when he comes to Beech Park, you shall sing him my favourite Scotch song, 'should auld acquaintance be forgot.' I would sing it myself if I could; but I think every English woman, who pretends to sing Scotch songs, ought to have the bow-string;" then turning to the harpsichord, she began to play it with exquisite taste and feeling.

"There," said she, rising with equal levity; "is not that worth all the formal bows—and 'recollects to have had the pleasure'—and 'long time since I had the honour'—and such sort of hateful reminiscences, that make one feel nothing, but that they are a great deal older, and uglier, stupider, and more formal than they were so many years before."

"Where the early ties of the heart remain unbroken," said Colonel Lennox, with some emotion, "such remembrances do indeed give it back all its first freshness; but it cannot be to every one a pleasure to have

ts feelings awakened, even by tones such as these."

There was nothing of austerity in this; on the contrary, there was so much sweetness mingled with the melancholy which shaded his countenance, that even Lady Emily was touched, and for a moment silent. The entrance of Mrs. Lennox relieved her from her embarrassment. She flew towards her, and taking her hand, "My dear Mrs. Lennox, I feel very much as if I were come here in the capacity of an executioner;—no, not exactly that, but rather a sort of constable or bailiff;—for I am come on the part of Lady Juliana Douglas, to summon you to surrender the person of her well-beloved daughter, to be disposed of as she in her wisdom may think fit."

"Not to-day, surely," cried Mrs. Lennox in alarm; "to-morrow—"

"My orders are peremptory—the suit is pressing," with a significant smile to Ma-

ry; "this day—oh, ye hours!" looking at a time piece, "this very minute, come Mary—are you ready—*cap-a-pee?*"

At another time Mary would have thought only of the regrets of her venerable friend at parting with her; but now she felt only her own impatience to be gone, and she hastily quitted the room to prepare for her departure.

On returning to it, Colonel Lennox advanced to meet her, evidently desirous of saying something, yet labouring under great embarrassment.

"Were it not too selfish and presumptuous," said he, while his heightened colour spoke his confusion, "I would venture to express a hope that your absence will not be very long from my poor mother."

Mary pretended to be very busy collecting her work, drawings, &c. which lay scattered about, and merely bent her head in acknowledgment. Colonel Lennox proceeded—

"I am aware of the sacrifice it must be to such as Miss Douglas, to devote her time and talents to the comforting of the blind and desolate; and I cannot express—she cannot conceive—the gratitude—the respect—the admiration, with which my heart is filled at such proofs of noble disinterested benevolence on her part."

Had Mary raised her eyes to those that vainly sought to meet her's, she would there have read all, and more than had been expressed; but she could only think, "he has been entreated to love!" and at that humiliating idea, she bent her head still lower to hide the colour that dyed her cheek to an almost painful degree, while a sense of suffocation at her throat prevented her disclaiming, as she wished to do, the merit of any sacrifice. Some sketches of Lochmarlie lay upon a table, at which she had been drawing the day before; they had ever been precious in her sight till now; but they only excited feelings of mortification, as

she recollected having taken them from her *portefeuille*, at Mrs. Lennox's request to shew to her son.

"This was part of the parade by which I was to win him," thought she with bitterness; and scarcely conscious of what she did, she crushed them together, and threw them into the fire. Then hastily advancing to Mrs. Lennox, she tried to bid her farewell; but, as she thought it was for the last time, tears of tenderness as well as pride stood in her eyes.

"God bless you, my dear child!" said the unsuspecting Mrs. Lennox, as she held her in her arms. "And God *will* bless you in his way—though his ways are not as our ways. I cannot urge you to return to this dreary abode. But oh, Mary! think sometimes in your gaiety, that when you do come, you bring gladness to a mournful heart, and lighten eyes that never see the sun!"

Mary too much affected to reply, could only wring the hand of her venerable friend, as she tore herself from her embrace, and followed Lady Emily to the carriage. For some time they proceeded in silence. Mary dreaded to encounter her cousin's eyes, which she was aware were fixed upon her with more than their usual scrutiny. She therefore kept her's steadily employed in surveying the well-known objects the road presented. At length her Ladyship began in a grave tone.

"You appear to have had very stormy weather at Rose Hall?"

"Very much so," replied Mary, without knowing very well what she said.

"And we have had nothing but calms and sun-shine at Beech Park. Is not that strange?"

"Very singular indeed."

"I left the barometer very high—not quite at *settled calm*—that would be too

much ; but I find it very low indeed—absolutely below nothing."

Mary now did look up in some surprise; but she hastily withdrew from the intolerable expression of her cousin's eyes.

"Dear Lady Emily !" cried she, in a deprecating tone.

"Well—what more ? You can't suppose I'm to put up with hearing my own name ; I've heard that fifty times to-day already from Lady Juliana's parrot—come, your face speaks volumes. I read a declaration of love in the colour of your cheeks—a refusal in the height of your nose—remorse in the twinkling of your eye—a sort of general agitation in the quiver of your lip—and the *déréglement* of your hair. Now for your pulse—a *leettle* hasty, as Dr. Redgill would say; but let your tongue declare the rest."

Mary would fain have concealed the cause of her distress from every human being, as she felt as if degraded still lower by repeat

ing it to another; and she remained silent, struggling with her emotions.

"'Pon my honour, Mary, you really do use great liberties with my patience and good nature. I appeal to yourself whether I might not just as well have been reading one of Tully's orations to a mule all this while. Come, you must really make haste to tell your tale, for I am dying to disclose mine. Or, shall I begin? No—that would be inverting the order of nature or custom, which is the same thing—beginning with the farce and ending with the tragedy—so *commencez au commencement, m'amie.*"

Thus urged, Mary at length, and with much hesitation, related to her cousin the humiliation she had experienced. "And after all," said she, as she ended, "I am afraid I behaved very like a fool—and yet what could I do? In my situation, what would you have done?"

"Done! why, I should have taken the old woman by the shoulders, and cried Boh!

in her ear. And so this is the mighty matter! You happen to overhear Mrs. Lennox, good old soul! recommending you as a wife to her son—What could be more natural? except his refusing to fall head and ears in love before he had time to pull his boots off. And then to have a wife recommended to him! and all your perfections set forth, as if you had been a laundry maid: an early riser, neat worker, regular attender upon church! Ugh!—I must say, I think his conduct quite meritorious. I could almost find in my heart to fall in love with him myself, were it for no other reason than because he is not such a Tommy Goodchild as to be in love at his mamma's bidding—that is, loving his mother as he does—for I see he could cut off a hand, or pluck out an eye, to please her, though he can't or won't give her his heart and soul to dispose of as she thinks proper."

"You quite misunderstand me," said Mary, with increasing vexation, "I did

not mean to say any thing against Colonel Lennox. I did not wish—I never once thought whether he liked me or not."

"That says very little for you: You must have a very bad taste if you care more for the mother's liking than the son's. Then, what vexes you so much? Is it at having made the discovery, that your good old friend is a—a—I beg your pardon—a bit of a goose? Well, never mind—since you don't care for the man, there's no mischief done. You have only to change the *dramatis personæ*. Fancy that you overheard me recommending you to Dr. Redgill for your skill in cookery—you'd only have laughed at that—so why should you weep at t'other. However, one thing I must tell you, whether it adds to your grief or not, I did remark that Charles Lennox looked very lover-like towards you; and, indeed, this sentimental passion he has put you in, becomes you excessively. I really never

saw you look so handsome before—it has given an energy and *esprit* to your countenance, which is the only thing it wants. You are very much obliged to him, were it only for having kindled such a fire in your eyes, and raised such a carnation in your cheek. It would have been long before good *larmoyante* Mrs. Lennox would have done as much for you. I shouldn't wonder were he to fall in love with you after all."

Lady Emily little thought how near she was to the truth when she talked in this random way. Colonel Lennox saw the wound he had innocently inflicted on Mary's feelings, and a warmer sentiment than any he had hitherto experienced had sprung up in his heart. Formerly, he had merely looked upon her as an amiable sweet-tempered girl; but when he saw her roused to a sense of her own dignity, and marked the struggle betwixt tender affection and offended deli-

cacy, he formed a higher estimate of her character, and a spark was kindled that wanted but opportunity to blaze into a flame, pure and bright as the shrine on which it burned. Such is the waywardness and caprice of even the best affections of the human breast.

CHAPTER V.

—"C'est a moi de *choisir* mon gendre;
Toi, tel qu'il est, c'est à toi de le prendre;
De vous aimer, si vous pouvez tous deux,
Et d'obéir à tout ce que je veux."

L'Enfant Prodigue.

"And now," said Lady Emily, "that I have listened to your story, which after all is really a very poor affair, do you listen to mine. The heroine in both is the same, but the hero differs by some degrees. Know, then, as the ladies in novels say, that the day which saw you depart from Beech

Park was the day destined to decide your fate, and dash your hopes, if ever you had any, of becoming Duchess of Altamont. The Duke arrived, I know, for the express purpose of being enamoured of you; but, alas! you were not—and there was Adelaide so sweet—so gracious—so beautiful—the poor gull was caught, and is now, I really believe, as much in love as it is in the nature of a stupid man to be. I must own she has played her part admirably, and has made more use of her time than I, with all my rapidity, could have thought possible. In fact, the Duke is now all but her declared lover, and that merely stands upon a point of punctilio."

"But Lord Lindore!" exclaimed Mary, in astonishment.

"Why, that part of the story is what I don't quite comprehend. Sometimes I think it is a struggle with Adelaide. Lindore, poor, handsome, captivating, on one hand;

his Grace, rich, stupid, magnificent, on the other. As for Lindore, he seems to stand quite aloof. Formerly, you know, he never used to stir from her side, or notice any one else. Now he scarcely notices her, at least, in presence of the Duke. Sometimes he affects to look unhappy, but I believe it is mere affectation. I doubt if he ever thought seriously of Adelaide, or indeed any body else, that he could have in a straight forward Ally Croker sort of a way—but something too much of this. While all this has been going on in one corner, there comes regularly every day Mr. William Downe Wright, looking very much as if he had lost his shoe-string, or pocket handkerchief, and had come there to look for it. I had some suspicion of the nature of the loss, but was hopeful he would have the sense to keep it to himself. No such thing: he yesterday stumbled upon Lady Juliana all alone, and, in the weakest of his weak moments, informed her that the

loss he had sustained was no less than the loss of that precious jewel his heart; and that the object of his search was no other than that of Miss Mary Douglas to replace it! He even carried his *bêtise* so far as to request her permission, or her influence, or, in short, something that her Ladyship never was asked for by any mortal in their senses before, to aid him in his pursuit. You know how it delights her to be dressed in a little brief authority; so you may conceive her transports at seeing the sceptre of power thus placed in her hands. In the heat of her pride, she makes the matter known to the whole household. Redgills, cooks, stable-boys, scullions, all are quite *au fait* to your marriage with Mr. Downe Wright; so I hope you'll allow that it was about time you should be made acquainted with it yourself. But why so pale and frightened-looking?"

Poor Mary was, indeed, shocked at her cousin's intelligence. With the high-

est feelings of filial reverence, she found herself perpetually called upon, either to sacrifice her own principles, or to act in direct opposition to her mother's will; and, upon this occasion, she saw nothing but endless altercation awaiting her: for her heart revolted from the indelicacy of such measures, and she could not for a moment brook the idea of being *bestowed* in marriage. But she had little time for reflection. They were now at Beech Park; and, as she alighted, a servant informed her, Lady Juliana wished to see her in her dressing room immediately. Thither she repaired with a beating heart and agitated step. She was received with greater kindness than she had ever yet experienced from her mother.

"Come in, my dear," cried she, as she extended two fingers to her, and slightly touched her cheek. "You look very well this morning—much better than usual. Your complexion is much improved. At the same time, you must be sensible how

few girls are married merely for their looks —that is, married well—unless, to be sure, their beauty is something *à merveilleuse*—such as your sister's, for instance. I assure you, it is an extraordinary piece of good fortune in a merely pretty girl to make what is vulgarly called a good match. I know, at least, twenty really very nice young women at this moment who cannot get themselves established."

Mary was silent; and her mother, delighted at her own good sense, and judicious observations, went on—

"That being the case, you may judge how very comfortable I must feel at having managed to procure for you a most excessive good establishment—just the very thing I have long wished, as I have felt quite at a loss about you of late, my dear. When your sister marries, I shall, of course, reside with her; and, as I consider your *liason* with those Scotch people as complete-

ly at an end, I have really been quite wretched as to what was to become of you. I can't tell you, therefore, how excessively relieved I was when Mr. Downe Wright yesterday asked my permission to address you. Of course, I could not hesitate an instant; so you will meet him at dinner as your accepted. By the bye, your hair is rather blown. I shall send Fanchon to dress it for you. You have really got very pretty hair; I wonder I never remarked it before. O! and Mrs. Downe Wright is to wait upon me to-morrow, I think; and then, I believe, we must return the visit. There is a sort of etiquette, you know, in all these matters: that is the most unpleasant part of it; but when that is over, you will have nothing to think of but ordering your things."

For a few minutes, Mary was too much confounded by her mother's rapidity to reply. She had expected to be urged to ac-

cept of Mr. Downe Wright; but to be told that was actually done for her was more than she was prepared for. At length she found voice to say, that Mr. Downe Wright was almost a stranger to her, and she must therefore be excused from receiving his addresses at present.

"How excessively childish!" exclaimed Lady Juliana, angrily. "I won't hear of any thing so perfectly foolish. You know (or, at any rate, I do,) all that is necessary to know. I know that he is a man of family and fortune, heir to a title, uncommonly handsome, and remarkably sensible and well-informed. I can't conceive what more you would wish to know!"

"I would wish to know something of his character—his principles—his habits—temper, talents—in short, all those things on which my happiness would depend."

"Character and principles!—one would suppose you were talking of your footman!

Mr. Downe Wright's character is perfectly good. I never heard any thing against it. As to what you call his principles, I must profess my ignorance. I really can't tell whether he is a Methodist ; but I know he is a gentleman—has a large fortune—is very good-looking—and is not at all dissipated, I believe. In short, you are most excessively fortunate in meeting with such a man."

"But I have not the slightest partiality for him," said Mary, colouring. "It cannot be expected that I should, when I have not been half a dozen times in his company. I must be allowed some time before I can consent even to consider—"

"I don't mean that you are to marry tomorrow. It may probably be six weeks, or two months, before every thing can be arranged."

Mary saw she must speak boldly.

"But I must be allowed much longer

time before I can consider myself as sufficiently acquainted with Mr. Downe Wright, to think of him at all in that light. And even then—he may be very amiable, and yet"—hesitating—"I may not be able to love him as I ought."

"Love!" exclaimed Lady Juliana, her eyes sparkling with anger; "I desire I may never hear that word again from any daughter of mine. I am determined I shall have no disgraceful love-marriages in the family. No well educated young woman ever thinks of such a thing now, and I won't hear a syllable on the subject."

"I shall never marry any body, I am sure, that you disapprove of," said Mary, timidly.

"No; I shall take care of that. I consider it the duty of parents to establish their children properly in the world, without any regard to their ideas on the subject. I think, I must be rather a better judge of

the matter than you can possibly be, and I shall therefore make a point of your forming what I consider a proper alliance. Your sister, I know, won't hesitate to sacrifice her own affections to please me. She was most excessively attached to Lord Lindore —every body knew that; but she is convinced of the propriety of preferring the Duke of Altamont, and won't hesitate in sacrificing her own feellings to mine. But, indeed, she has ever been all that I could wish—so perfectly beautiful, and, at the same time, so excessively affectionate and obedient. She approves entirely of your marriage with Mr. Downe Wright, as, indeed, all your friends do. I don't include *your* friend Lady Emily in that number. I look upon her as a most improper companion for you; and the sooner you are separated from her the better. So now, good bye for the present: You have only to behave as other young ladies do upon those

occasions, which, by the bye, is generally to give as much trouble to their friends as they possibly can."

There are some people who, furious themselves at opposition, cannot understand the possibility of others being equally firm and decided in a gentle manner. Lady Juliana was one of those who always expect to carry their point by a raised voice and sparkling eyes; and it was with difficulty Mary, with her timid air, and gentle accents, could convince her that she was determined to judge for herself in a matter in which her happiness was so deeply involved. When at last brought to comprehend it, her Ladyship's indignation knew no bounds; and Mary was accused in the same breath with having formed some low connection in Scotland, and of seeking to supplant her sister, by aspiring to the Duke of Altamont. And, at length, the conference ended pretty much where it began.—Lady Juliana resolved

that her daughter should marry to please her, and her daughter equally resolved not to be driven into an engagement from which her heart recoiled.

CHAPTER VI.

"Qu'on vante en lui la foi, l'honneur, la probité;
Qu'on prise sa candeur et sa civilité;
Qu'il soit doux, complaisant, officieux, sincere:
On le veut, j'y souscris, et suis pret à me teire.

BOILEAU.

WHEN Mary entered the drawing-room, she found herself, without knowing how, by the side of Mr. Downe Wright. At dinner it was the same; and, in short, it seemed an understood thing, that they were to be constantly together.

There was something so gentle and unassuming in his manner, that, almost provok-

ed as she was by the folly of his proceedings, she found it impossible to resent it by her behaviour towards him; and, indeed, without being guilty of actual rudeness, of which she was incapable, it would not have been easy to have made him comprehend the nature of her sentiments. He appeared perfectly satisfied with the toleration he met with; and, compared to Adelaide's disdainful glances, and Lady Emily's biting sarcasms, Mary's gentleness and civility might well be mistaken for encouragement. But even under the exhilarating influence of hope and high spirits, his conversation was so insipid and common-place, that Mary found it a relief to turn even to Dr. Redgill. It was evident the Doctor was aware of what was going on, for he regarded her with that increased respect due to the future mistress of a splendid establishment. Between the courses he made some complimentary allusions to Highland mutton and red deer; and he even carried his attentions so far as

to whisper, at the very first mouthful, that *les côtellettes de saumon* were superb, when he had never been known to commend any thing to another, until he had fully discussed it himself. On the opposite side of the table sat Adelaide and the Duke of Altamont, the latter looking still more heavy and inanimate than ever. The operation of eating over, he seemed unable to keep himself awake, and every now and then yielded to a gentle slumber, from which, however, he was instantly recalled at the sound of Adelaide's voice, when he exclaimed, "Ah! charming—very charming, ah!"—Lady Emily looked *from* them as she hummed some part of Dryden's ode—

> "Aloft in awful state
> The godlike-hero sat, &c.
> The lovely Thais by his side,
> Look'd like a blooming eastern bride."

Then, as his Grace closed his eyes, and his head sunk on his shoulder—

"With ravish'd ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod."

Lady Juliana, who would have been highly incensed, had she suspected the application of the words, was so unconscious of it, as to join occasionally in singing them, to Mary's great confusion, and Adelaide's manifest displeasure.

When they returned to the drawing-room, "Heavens! Adelaide," exclaimed her cousin, in an affected manner, "what are you made of? Semelé herself was but a mere cinder-wench to you! How can you stand such a Jupiter—and not scorched! not even singed, I protest!" pretending to examine her all over. "I vow, I trembled at your temerity—your familiarity with the imperial nod was fearful. I every instant expected to see you turned into a live coal."

"I did burn," said Adelaide, "with shame, to see the mistress of a house forget what was due to her father's guests."

"There's a slap on the cheek for me! Mercy! how it burns!—No, I did not forget what was due to my father's guests; on the contrary, I consider it due to them to save them, if I can, from the snares that I see set for them. I have told you that I abhor all traps, whether for the poor simple mouse that comes to steal its bit of cheese, or for the dull elderly gentleman who falls asleep with a star on his breast."

"This is one of the many kind and polite allusions for which I am indebted to your Ladyship," said Adelaide, haughtily; "but I trust the day will come when I shall be able to discharge what I owe you."

And she quitted the room, followed by Lady Juliana, who could only make out that Lady Emily had been insolent, and

that Adelaide was offended. A pause followed.

"I see you think I am in the wrong, Mary; I can read that in the little reproachful glance you gave me just now. Well, perhaps I am; but I own it chafes my spirit to sit and look on such a scene of iniquity—Yes, iniquity I call it, for a woman to be in love with one man, and at the same time laying snares for another. You may think, perhaps, that Adelaide has no heart to love any thing; but she has a heart, such as it is, though it is much too fine for every day use, and therefore it is kept locked up in a marble casket, quite out of reach of you or me. But I'm mistaken if Frederic has not made himself master of it! Not that I should blame her for that, if she would be honestly and downrightly in love with him. But how despicable to see her, with her affections placed upon one man, at the same time lavishing all her atten-

tions on another—and that other, if he had been plain John Altamont, Esq. she would not have been commonly civil to! And, *apropos* of civility—I must tell you, if you mean to refuse your hero, you were too civil by half to him. I observed you at dinner; you sat perfectly straight and answered every thing he said to you."

"What could I do?" asked Mary, in some surprise.

"I'll tell you what I would have done, and have thought the most honourable mode of proceeding; I should have turned my back upon him, and have merely thrown him a monosyllable now and then over my shoulder."

"I could not be less than civil to him, and I am sure I was not more."

"Civility is too much for a man one means to refuse. You'll never get rid of a stupid man by civility. Whenever I had any reason to apprehend a lover, I thought it my duty to turn short upon him and give

him a snarl at the outset, which rid me of him at once. But I really begin to think I manage these matters better than any body else—' Where I love, I profess it: where I hate, in every circumstance I dare proclaim it.' "

Mary tried to defend her sister, in the first place; but though her charity would not allow her to censure, her conscience whispered there was much to condemn; and she was relieved from what she felt a difficult task, when the gentlemen began to drop in.

In spite of all her manœuvres, Mr. Downe Wright contrived to be next her, and whenever she changed her seat, she was sure of his following her. She had also the mortification of overhearing Lady Juliana tell the Duke, that Mr. Downe Wright was the accepted lover of her youngest daughter—that he was a man of large fortune—and heir to his uncle, Lord Glenallan!

" Ah! a nephew of my Lord Glenallan's!

Indeed—a pretty young man—like the family!—Poor Lord Glenallan! I knew him very well: He has had the palsy since then, poor man—ah!"

The following day Mary was compelled to receive Mrs. Downe Wright's visit; but she was scarcely conscious of what passed, for Colonel Lennox arrived at the same time; and it was equally evident that his visit was also intended for her. She felt that she ought to appear unconcerned in his presence, and she tried to be so; but still the painful idea would recur, that he had been solicited to love her, and, unskilled in the arts of even innocent deception, she could only try to hide the agitation under the coldness of her manner.

"Come, Mary," cried Lady Emily, as if in answer to something Colonel Lennox had addressed to her in a low voice, "do you remember the promise I made Colonel Lennox, and which it rests with you to perform?"

"I never consider myself bound to perform the promises of others," replied Mary, gravely.

"In some cases that may be a prudent resolution, but, in the present, it is surely an unfriendly one," said Colonel Lennox.

"A most inhuman one!" cried Lady Emily, "since you and I, it seems, cannot commence our friendship without something sentimental to set us a going. It rests with you, Mary, to be the founder of our friendship; and if you manage the matter well, that is, sing in your best manner, we shall perhaps make it a triple alliance, and admit you as third."

"As every man is said to be the artificer of his own fortune, so every one, I think, had best be the artificer of their own friendship," said Mary, trying to smile, as she pulled her embroidery frame towards her, and began to work.

"Neither can be the worse of a good friend to help them on," observed Mrs. Downe Wright.

"But both may be materially injured by an injudicious one," said Colonel Lennox; "and although, on this occasion, I am the greatest sufferer by it, I must acknowledge the truth of Miss Douglas' observation: Friendship and love, I believe, will always be found to thrive best when left to themselves."

"And so ends my novel, elegant, and original plan, for striking up a sudden friendship," cried Lady Emily. "Pray, Mr. Downe Wright, can you suggest any thing better for the purpose than an old song?"

Mr. Downe Wright, who was not at all given to suggesting, looked a little embarrassed.

"Pull the bell, William, for the carriage," said his mother; "we most now be moving." And with a general obeisance to the company, and a significant pressure of the

hand to Mary, she withdrew her son from his dilemma. Although a shrewd, penetrating woman, she did not possess that tact and delicacy necessary to comprehend the finer feelings of a mind superior to her own; and in Mary's averted looks and constrained manner, she saw nothing but what she thought quite proper and natural in her situation. "As for Lady Emily," she observed, "there would be news of her and that fine dashing looking Colonel yet, and Miss Adelaide would, perhaps, come down a pin before long."

Soon after Colonel Lennox took his leave, in spite of Lady Emily's pressing invitation for him to spend the day there, and meet her brother, who had been absent for some days, but was now expected home. He promised to return again soon, and departed.

"How prodigiously handsome Colonel Lennox looked to-day!" said she, addressing Mary; "and how perfectly unconscious,

at least indifferent, he seems about it! It is quite refreshing to see a handsome man that is neither a fool nor a coxcomb."

"Handsome! no, I don't think he is very handsome," said Lady Juliana: "Rather dark, don't you think, my love?" turning to Adelaide, who sat apart at a table writing, and had scarcely deigned to lift her head all the time.

"Who do you mean? The man who has just gone out? Is his name Lennox?—Yes, he is rather handsome."

"I believe you are right; he certainly is good looking, but in a peculiar style. I don't quite like the expression of his eye, and he wants that air *distingué*, which, indeed, belongs exclusively to persons of birth."

"He has perfectly the air of a man of fashion," said Adelaide, in a decided tone, as if ashamed to agree with her mother. "Perhaps *un peu militaire*, but nothing at all professional."

"Lennox!—it is a Scotch name," observed Lady Juliana contemptuously.

"And, to cut the matter short," said Lady Emily, as she was quitting the room, "the man who has just gone out is Colonel Lennox, and not the Duke of Altamont."

After a few more awkward, indefinite sorts of visits, in which Mary found it impossible to come to an explanation, she was relieved, for the present, from the assiduities of her lover. Lady Juliana received a note from Mrs. Downe Wright, apologizing for what she termed her son's unfortunate absence at such a critical time; but he had received accounts of the alarming illness of his uncle Lord Glenallan, and had, in consequence, set off instantly for Scotland, where she was preparing to follow; concluding with particular regards to Miss Mary—hopes of being soon able to resume their pleasant footing in the family, &c. &c.

"How excessively well arranged it will be that old man's dying at this time," said her Ladyship, as she tossed the note to her daughter; "Lord Glenallan will sound so much better than Mr. Downe Wright. The name I have always considered as the only objectionable part: You are really most prodigiously fortunate."

Mary was now aware of the folly of talking reason to her mother, and remained silent; thankful for the present peace this event would ensure her, and almost tempted to wish that Lord Glenallan's doom might not speedily be decided.

CHAPTER VII.

> "It seems it is as proper to our age,
> To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
> As it is common for the younger sort
> To lack discretion."
>
> HAMLET.

LORD LINDORE and Colonel Lennox had been boyish acquaintances, and a sort of superficial intimacy was soon established between them, which served as the ostensible cause of his frequent visits at Beech Park. But to Mary, who was more alive to the difference of their characters and sentiments than any other member of the

family, this appeared very improbable, and she could not help suspecting, that love for the sister, rather than friendship for the brother, was the real motive by which he was actuated. In a half jesting manner she mentioned her suspicions to Lady Emily, who treated the idea with her usual ridicule.

"I really could not have supposed you so extremely missy-ish, Mary," said she, "as to imagine, that because two people like each other's society, and talk, and laugh together a little more than usual, that they must needs be in love! I believe Charles Lennox loves me much the same as he did eleven years ago, when I was a little wretch, that used to pull his hair, and spoil his watch. And as for me, you know that I consider myself quite as an old woman—at least as a married one; and he is perfectly *au fait* to my engagement with Edward. I have even shewn him his picture, and some of his letters."

Mary looked incredulous.

"You may think as you please, but I tell you it is so. In my situation, I should scorn to have Colonel Lennox, or any body else, in love with me. As to his liking to talk to me, pray, who else can he talk to? Adelaide would sometimes *condescend* indeed; but he won't be condescended to, that's clear, not even by a Duchess. With what mock humility he meets her airs! how I adore him for it! Then you are such a pillar of ice!—so shy and unsociable when he is present!—and, by the bye, if I did not despise recrimination as the *pis aller* of all conscious Misses, I would say you are much more the object of his *attention*, at least, than I am. Several times I have caught him looking very earnestly at you, when, by the laws of good breeding, his eyes ought to have been fixed exclusively upon me; and—"

"Pshaw!" interrupted Mary, colouring, "that is mere absence—nothing to the pur-

pose—or, perhaps," forcing a smile, " he may be *trying* to love me !"

Mary thought of her poor old friend, as she said this, with bitterness of heart. It was long since she had seen her ; and when she had last inquired for her, her son had said he did not think her well, with a look Mary could not misunderstand. She had heard him make an appointment with Lord Lindore for the following day, and she took the opportunity of his certain absence to visit his mother. Mrs. Lennox, indeed, looked ill, and seemed more than usually depressed. She welcomed Mary with her usual tenderness, but even her presence seemed to fail of inspiring her with gladness.

Mary found she was totally unsuspicious of the cause of her estrangement, and imputed it to a very different one.

" You have been a great stranger, my dear !" said she, as she affectionately em-

braced her; "but at such a time I could not expect you to think of me."

"Indeed," answered Mary, equally unconscious of her meaning, "I have thought much and often, very often, upon you, and wished I could have come to you; but—" she stopped for she could not tell the truth, and would not utter a falsehood.

"I understand it all," said Mrs. Lennox, with a sigh. "Well—well—God's will be done!" Then trying to be more cheerful, "Had you come a little sooner, you would have met Charles. He is just gone out with Lord Lindore. He was unwilling to leave me, as he always is, and when he does, I believe it is as much to please me as himself. Ah! Mary, I once hoped that I might have lived to see you the happy wife of the best of sons. I may speak out now, since that is all over. God has willed otherwise, and may you be rewarded in the choice you have made!"

Mary was struck with consternation to find that her supposed engagement with Mr. Downe Wright, had spread even to Rose Hall; and in the greatest confusion she attempted to deny it. But after the acknowledgment she had just heard, she acquitted herself awkwardly; for she felt as if an open explanation would only serve to revive hopes that never could be realized, and subject Colonel Lennox and herself to future perplexities. Nothing but the whole truth would have sufficed to undeceive Mrs. Lennox, for she had had the intelligence of Mary's engagement from Mrs. Downe Wright herself, who, for better security of what she already considered her son's property, had taken care to spread the report of his being the accepted lover before she left the country. Mary felt all the unpleasantness of her situation. Although detesting deceit and artifice of every kind, her confused and stammering denials seemed rather to corroborate the fact; but she felt

that she could not declare her resolution of never bestowing her hand upon Mr. Downe Wright, without seeming at the same time, to court the addresses of Colonel Lennox. Then how painful—how unjust to herself, as well as cruel to him, to have it for an instant believed, that she was the betrothed of one whose wife she was resolved she never would be!

In short, poor Mary's mind was a complete chaos; and, for the first time in her life, she found it impossible to determine which was the right course for her to pursue. Even in the midst of her distress, however, she could not help smiling at the *naïveté* of the good old lady's remarks.

"He is a handsome young man, I hear," said she, still in allusion to Mr. Downe Wright: "has a fine fortune, and an easy temper. All these things help people's happiness, though they cannot make it; and his choice of you, my dear Mary, shews that he has some sense."

"What an eulogium!" said Mary, laughing and blushing. "Were he really to me what you suppose, I must be highly flattered; but I must again assure you, it is not using Mr. Downe Wright well to talk of him as any thing to me. My mother, indeed——"

"Ah! Mary, my dear, let me advise you to beware of being led, even by a mother, in such a matter as this. God forbid that I should ever recommend disobedience towards a parent's will; but I fear you have yielded too much to your's. I said, indeed, when I heard it, that I feared undue influence had been used; for that I could not think William Downe Wright would ever have been the choice of your heart. Surely parents have much to answer for, who mislead their children in such an awful step as marriage!"

This was the severest censure Mary had ever heard drop from Mrs. Lennox's lips; and she could not but marvel at the self-

delusion that led her thus to condemn in another the very error she had committed herself; but under such different circumstances, that she would not easily have admitted it to be the same. She sought for the happiness of her son, while Lady Juliana, she was convinced, wished only her own aggrandizement.

"Yes, indeed," said Mary, in answer to her friend's observation, "parents ought, if possible, to avoid even forming wishes for their children. Hearts are wayward things, even the best of them:" Then more seriously she added, "and dear Mrs. Lennox, do not either blame my mother nor pity me; for be assured, with my heart only will I give my hand; or rather, I should say, with my hand only will I give my heart: And now good bye," cried she, starting up and hurrying away, as she heard Colonel Lennox's voice in the hall.

She met him on the stair, and would have passed on with a slight remark, but he turn-

ed with her, and finding she had dismissed the carriage, intending to walk home, he requested permission to attend her. Mary declined; but, snatching up his hat, and whistling his dogs, he set out with her in spite of her remonstrances to the contrary.

"If you persist in refusing my attendance," said he, "you will inflict an incurable wound upon my vanity. I shall suspect you are ashamed of being seen in such company. To be sure, myself, with my shabby jacket, and my spattered dogs, do form rather a ruffian-like escort; and I should not have dared to have offered my services to a fine lady—but you are not a fine lady, I know;" and he gently drew her arm within his as they began to ascend a hill.

This was the first time Mary had found herself alone with Colonel Lennox, since that fatal day which seemed to have divided them for ever. At first she felt uneasy and embarrassed, but there was so much good sense and good feeling in the tone of

his conversation; it was so far removed either from pedantry or frivolity, that all disagreeable ideas soon gave way to the pleasure she had in conversing with one whose turn of mind seemed so similiar to her own; and it was not till she had parted from him at the gate of Beech Park, she had time to wonder, how she could possibly have walked two miles *tête-à-tête* with a man whom she had heard solicited to love her!

From that day Colonel Lennox's visits insensibly increased in length and number; but Lady Emily seemed to appropriate them entirely to herself; and certainly all the flow of his conversation, the brilliancy of his wit, were directed to her; but Mary could not but be conscious that his looks were much oftener rivetted on herself, and if his attentions were not such as to attract general observation, they were such as she could not fail of perceiving and being unconsciously gratified by.

"How I admire Charles Lennox's manner to you, Mary!" said her cousin; "after the awkward dilemma you were both in, it was no easy matter to know how to proceed: a vulgar-minded man would either have oppressed you with his attentions, or insulted you by his neglect, while he steers so gracefully free from either extreme; and I observe, you are the only woman upon whom he designs to bestow *les petits soins.* How I despise a man who is ever on the watch to pick up every silly Miss's fan or glove, that she thinks it pretty to drop! No—the woman he loves, whether his mother or his wife, will always be distinguished by him, were she amongst queens and empresses; not by his silly vanity or vulgar fondness, but by his marked and gentlemanlike attentions towards her. In short, the best thing you can do, is to make up your quarrel with him—take him for all in all—you won't meet with such another—certainly not amongst your Highland lairds,

by all that I can learn; and, by the bye, I do suspect, he is now, as you say, trying to love you; and let him—you will be very well repaid if he succeeds."

Mary's heart swelled at the thoughts of submitting to such an indignity, especially as she was beginning to feel conscious that Colonel Lennox was not quite the object of indifference to her that he ought to be; but her cousin's remarks only served to render her more distant and reserved to him than ever.

CHAPTER VIII.

> " What dangers ought'st thou not to dread,
> When Love, that's blind, is by blind Fortune led ?"
>
> COWLEY

AT length the long-looked for day arrived. The Duke of Altamont's proposals were made in due form, and in due form accepted. Lady Juliana seemed now touching the pinnacle of earthly joy; for, next to being greatly married herself, her happiness centred in seeing her daughter at the head of a splendid establishment. Again visions of bliss hovered around her, and " Peers, and Dukes, and all their sweeping train,"

swam before her eyes, as she anticipated the brilliant results to herself from so noble an alliance; for self was still, as it had ever been, her ruling star, and her affection for her daughter was the mere result of vanity and ambition.

The ensuing weeks were passed in all the bustle of preparations necessarily attendant on the nuptials of the great. Every morning brought from Town, dresses, jewels, patterns, and packages of all descriptions. Lady Juliana was in ecstacies, even though it was but happiness in the second person. Mary watched her sister's looks with the most painful solicitude; for from her lips she knew she never would learn the sentiments of her heart. But Adelaide was aware she had a part to act, and she went through it with an ease and self-possession that seemed to defy all scrutiny. Once or twice, indeed, her deepening colour and darkening brow, betrayed the feelings of her heart, as the Duke of Altamont and

Lord Lindore were brought into comparison: and Mary shuddered to think that her sister was even now ashamed of the man whom she was so soon to vow to love, honour, and obey. She had vainly tried to lead Adelaide to the subject. Adelaide would listen to nothing which she had reason to suppose was addressed to herself; but either with cool contempt took up a book, or left the room, or, with insolent affectation, would put her hands to her head, exclaiming, "*mes oreilles n'etoient pas faites pour les entretiens serieux.*" All Mary's worst fears were confirmed a few days before that fixed for the marriage. As she entered the music-room, she was startled to find Lord Lindore and Adelaide alone. Unwilling to suppose that her presence would be considered as an interruption, she seated herself at a little distance from them, and was soon engrossed by her task. Adelaide, too, had the air of being deeply intent upon some trifling employment; and Lord Lin-

dore, as he sat opposite to her, with his head resting upon his hands, had the appearance of being engaged in reading. All were silent for some time; but as Mary happened to look up, she saw Lord Lindore's eyes fixed earnestly upon her sister, and with a voice of repressed feeling he repeated, "*Ah! je le sens, ma Julie! si'l falloit renoncer à vous, il n'y auroit plus pour moi d'autre sejour ni d'autre saison;*" and throwing down the book he quitted the room. Adelaide, pale and agitated, rose as if to follow him; then, recollecting herself, she rushed from the apartment by an opposite door. Mary followed, vainly hoping that, in this moment of excited feeling, she might be induced to open her heart to the voice of affection—but Adelaide was a stranger to sympathy, and saw only the degradation of confessing the struggle she endured in choosing betwixt love and ambition. That her heart was Lord Lindore's, she could not conceal from herself, though she would

not confess it to another ; and that other, the tenderest of sisters, whose only wish was to serve her. Mary's tears and entreaties were therefore in vain, and at Adelaide's repeated desire, she at length quitted her, and returned to the room she had left.

She found Lady Emily there with a paper in her hand. " Lend me your ears, Mary," cried she, " while I read these lines to you. Don't be afraid, there are no secrets in them, or at least none that you or I will be a whit the wiser for, as they are truly in a most mystic strain. I found them lying upon this table, and they are in Frederick's hand-writing, for I see he affects the *soupirant* at present; and it seems there has been a sort of a sentimental farce acted between Adelaide and him. He pretends, that although distractedly in love with her, he is not so selfish as even to wish her to marry him in preference to the Duke of Altamont; and Adelaide, not to be out-

done in heroics, has also made it out, that it is the height of virtue in her to espouse the Duke of Altamont, and sacrifice all the tenderest affections of her heart to duty!—Duty! yes, the duty of being a Duchess, and of living in state and splendour with the man she secretly despises, to the pleasure of renouncing both for the man she loves; and so they have parted, and here, I suppose, is Lindore's lucubrations upon it, intended as a *souvenir* for Adelaide, I presume. Now, night visions befriend me!

The time returns when o'er my wilder'd mind,
A thraldom came which did each sense enshroud;
Not that I bowed in willing chain confined,
But that a soften'd atmosphere of cloud
Veiled every sense—conceal'd th' impending doom.
'Twas mystic night, and I seem'd borne along
By pleasing dread—and in a doubtful gloom,
Where fragrant incense and the sound of song,
And all fair things we dream of, floated by,
Lulling my fancy like a cradled child,
Till that the dear and guileless treachery,
Made me the wretch I am—so lost, so wild—
A mingled feeling, neither joy nor grief,
Dwelt in my heart—I knew not whence it came,
And—but that woe is me! 'twas passing brief,
Even at this hour I fain would feel the same!

I track'd a path of flowers—but flowers among
Were hissing serpents and drear birds of night,
That shot across and scared with boding cries;
And yet deep interest lurked in that affright,
Something endearing in those mysteries,
Which bade me still the desperate joy pursue,
Heedless of what might come—when from mine eyes
The clouds should pass, or what might then accrue.
The cloud *has* passed—the blissful power is flown,
The flowers are wither'd—wither'd all the scene.
But ah! the dear delusions I have known,
Are present still, with loved though altered mein:
I tread the self-same path in heart unchanged;
But changed now is all that path to me,
For where 'mong flowers and fountains once I ranged,
Are barren rocks and savage scenery!

Mary felt it was in vain to attempt to win her sister's confidence, and she was too delicate to seek to wrest her secrets from her; she therefore took no notice of this effusion of love and disappointment, which she concluded it to be.

Adelaide appeared at dinner as usual. All traces of agitation had vanished; and her manner was as cool and collected, as if all had been peace and tranquillity at heart. Lord Lindore's departure was slightly noticed. It was generally understood, that

he had been rejected by his cousin; and his absence at such a time was thought perfectly natural. The Duke merely remarking, with a vacant simper, "So Lord Lindore is gone—Ah! poor Lord Lindore."

Lady Juliana had, in a very early stage of the business, fixed in her own mind, that she, as a matter of course, would be invited to accompany her daughter upon her marriage; indeed, she had always looked upon it as a sort of triple alliance, that was to unite her as indissolubly to the fortunes of the Duke of Altamont, as though she had been his wedded wife. But the time drew near, and in spite of all her hints and manœuvres, no invitation had yet been extorted from Adelaide. The Duke had proposed to her to invite her sister, and even expressed something like a wish to that effect; for though he felt no positive pleasure in Mary's society, he was yet conscious of a void in her absence.—She was always in good humour—always gentle and polite—

and, without being able to tell why, his Grace always felt more at ease with her than with any body else. But his selfish bride seemed to think that the joys of her elevation would be diminished, if shared even by her own sister, and she coldly rejected the proposal. Lady Juliana was next suggested—for the Duke had a sort of vague understanding that his safety lay in a multitude. With him, as with all stupid people, company was society, words were conversation—and all the gradations of intellect, from Sir Isaac Newton, down to Dr. Redgill, were to him unknown. But although, as with most weak people, obstinacy was his *fort*, he was here again compelled to yield to the will of his bride, as she also declined the company of her mother for the present. The disappointment was somewhat softened to Lady Juliana, by the sort of indefinite hopes that were expressed by her daughter of seeing her in town when they were fairly esta-

blished; but until she had seen Altamont House, and knew its accommodations, she could fix nothing; and Lady Juliana was fain to solace herself with this dim perspective, instead of the brilliant reality her imagination had placed within her grasp. She felt, too, without comprehending, the imperfectness of all earthly felicity. As she witnessed the magnificent preparations for her daughter's marriage, it recalled the bitter remembrance of her own—and many a sigh burst from her heart as she thought, "Such as Adelaide is, I might have been, had I been blest with such a mother, and brought up to know what was for my good!"

The die was cast—Amidst pomp and magnificence, elate with pride, and sparkling with jewels, Adelaide Douglas reversed the fate of her mother; and while her affections were bestowed on another, she vowed, in the face of heaven, to belong only to the Duke of Altamont!

"Good bye, my dearest love!" said her mother, as she embraced her with transport, "and I shall be with you very soon; and, above all things, try to secure a good opera-box for the season. I assure you it is of the greatest consequence."

The Duchess impatiently hurried from the congratulations of her family, and throwing herself into the splendid equipage that awaited her, was soon lost to their view.

CHAPTER IX.

"Every white will have its black,
And every sweet its sour:"

As Lady Juliana experienced. Her daughter was Duchess of Altamont, but Grizzy Douglas had arrived in Bath!—The intelligence was communicated to Mary in a letter. It had no date, but was as follows:

"MY DEAR MARY,

You will See from the Date of this, that we are at last Arrived here, after a very long journey, which, you of Course Know it is from this to our Part of

the country ; at the same Time, it was uncommonly Pleasant, and we all enjoyed it very Much, only poor Sir Sampson was so ill that we Expected him to Expire every minute, which would have made it Extremely unpleasant for dear Lady Maclaughlan. He is now, I am happy to say, greatly Better, though still so Poorly, that I am much Afraid you will see a very Considerable change upon him. I sincerely hope, my dear Mary, that you will make a proper Apology to Lady Juliana for my not going to Beech Park (where I know I would be made most Welcome) directly—but I am certain she will Agree with me that it would be Highly Improper in me to leave Lady M'Laughlan when she is not at all Sure how long Sir Sampson may Live ; and it would Appear very Odd if I was to be out of the way at such a time as That. But you may Assure her, with my Kind love, and indeed all our Loves (as I am sure None of us can ever forget the Pleasant

time she spent with us at Glenfern in my Poor brother's lifetime, before you was Born) that I will Take the very first Opportunity of Spending some time at Beech Park before leaving Bath, as we Expect the Waters will set Sir Sampson quite on his Feet again. It will be a happy Meeting, I am certain, with Lady Juliana and all of us, as it is Eighteen years this spring since we have Met. You may be sure I have a great Deal to tell you and Lady Juliana too, about all Friends at Glenfern, whom I left all quite Well. Of course, the Report of Bella's and Betsy's marriages Must have reached Bath by this time, as it will be three Weeks to day since we left our part of the country; but in case it has not reached you, Lady M'Laughlan is of opinion that the Sooner you are made Acquainted with it the Better, especially as there is no doubt of it. Bella's marriage, which is in a manner fixed by this time, I daresay, though of Course it will not take

place for some time, is to Captain M'Nab of some Regiment, but I'm sure I Forget which, for there are so many Regiments, you know, it is Impossible to remember them All ; but he is quite a Hero, I know that, as he has been in Several battles, and had Two of his front teeth Knocked out at one of them, and was Much complimented about it ; and he Says, he is quite Certain of getting Great promotion—at any Rate a pension for it, so there is no Fear of him.

"Betsy has, if Possible, been still More fortunate than her Sister, although you know Bella was always reckoned the Beauty of the Family, though some People certainly preferred Betsy's Looks too. She has made a Complete conquest of Major M'Tavish, of the Militia, who, Independent of his rank, which is certainly very High, has also distinguished himself very much, and shewed the Greatest bravery once when there was a Very serious Riot about the

raising the Potatoes a penny a peck, when there was no Occasion for it, in the town of Dunoon; and it was very much talked of at the Time, as well as Being in all the Newspapers. This gives us all the Greatest Pleasure, as I am certain it will also Do Lady Juliana, and you, my dear Mary. At the same time, we Feel very much for poor Babby, and Beenie, and Becky, as they Naturally, and indeed all of us, Expected they would, of Course, be married first; and it is certainly a great Trial for them to See their younger sisters married before them. At the same Time, they are Wonderfully supported, and Behave with Astonishing firmness; and I Trust, my dear Mary, you will do the Same, as I have no Doubt you will All be married yet, as I am sure you Richly deserve it when it Comes. I hope I will see you Very soon, as Lady M'Laughlan, I am certain, will Make you most Welcome to call. We are living in Most elegant Lodgings—all the

Furniture is quite New, and perfectly Good. I do not know the Name of the street yet, as Lady M'Laughlan, which is no wonder, is not fond of being Asked questions when she is Upon a Journey; and, indeed, makes a Point of never Answering any, which, I daresay, is the Best way. But, of Course, any body will Tell you where Sir Sampson Maclaughlan, Baronet, of Lochmarlie Castle, ——shire, N. B., lives; and, if You are at any Loss, it has a Green door, and a most Elegant Balcony. I must now bid you adieu, my dear Mary, as I Am so soon to See yourself. Sir Sampson and Lady M'Laughlan unite with Me in Best compliments to the Family at Beech Park. And, in kind love to Lady Juliana and you, I remain, My dear Mary, your most affectione Aunt,

GRIZZEL DOUGLAS."

"P. S. I have a long letter for you, from Mrs. Douglas, which is in my Trunk, that is Coming by the —— Carrier, and

unless he is stopped by the Snow, I Expect he will be here in ten days."

With the idea of Grizzy was associated in Mary's mind all the dear familiar objects of her happiest days, and her eyes sparkled with delight at the thoughts of again beholding her.

"Oh! when may I go to Bath to dear aunt Grizzy?" exclaimed she, as she finished the letter. Lady Juliana looked petrified. Then recollecting that this was the first intimation her mother had received of such an event being even in contemplation, she made haste to exculpate her aunt at her own expense, by informing her of the truth. But nothing could be more unpalatable than the truth; and poor Mary's short-lived joy was soon turned into the bitterest sorrow at the reproaches that were showered upon her by the incensed Lady Juliana. But for her these people never would have thought of coming to Bath; or if they did, she should have had no connection with them.

She had been most excessively ill-used by Mr. Douglas' family, and had long since resolved to have no farther intercourse with them—they were nothing to her, &c. &c.— The whole concluding with a positive prohibition against Mary's taking any notice of her aunt.

"From all that has been said, Mary," said Lady Emily, gravely, "there can be no doubt but that you are the origin of Lady Juliana's unfortunate connection with the family of Douglas."

"Undoubtedly," said her Ladyship.

"But for you, it appears that she would not have known—certainly never would have acknowledged—that her husband had an aunt?"

"Certainly not," said Lady Juliana warmly.

"It is a most admirable plan," continued Lady Emily, in the same manner, "and I shall certainly adopt it. When I have children I am determined they shall be answerable for my making a foolish marriage;

and it shall be their fault if my husband has a mother.—*En attendant*, I am determined to patronize Edward's relations to the last degree; and therefore, unless Mary is permitted to visit her aunt as often as she pleases, I shall make a point of bringing the dear aunt Grizzy here. Yes, (putting her hand to the bell,) I shall order my carriage this instant, and set off. To-morrow, you know, we give a grand dinner in honour of Adelaide's marriage. Aunt Grizzy shall be queen of the feast."

Lady Juliana was almost suffocated with passion; but she knew her niece too well to doubt her putting her threat in execution, and there was distraction in the idea of the vulgar obscure Grizzy Douglas being presented to a fashionable party as her aunt. After a violent altercation, in which Mary took no part, an ungracious permission was at length extorted, which Mary eagerly availed herself of; and, charged with kind messages from Lady Emily,

set off in quest of aunt Grizzy, and the green door.

After much trouble, and many unsuccessful attacks upon green doors and balconies, she was going to give up the search in despair, when her eye was attracted by the figure of aunt Grizzy herself at full length, stationed at a window, in an old-fashioned riding-habit, and spectacles. The carriage was stopped; and in an instant Mary was in the arms of her aunt, all agitation, as Lochmarlie flashed on her fancy, at again hearing its native accents uttered by the voice familiar to her from infancy. Yet the truth must be owned. Mary's taste was somewhat startled, even while her heart warmed at the sight of the good old aunt. Association and affection still retained their magic influence over her; but absence had dispelled the blest illusions of habitual intercourse; and, for the first time, she beheld her aunt freed from its softening spell. Still her hear clung to

her as to one known and loved from infancy; and she soon rose superior to the weakness she felt was besetting her, in the slight sensation of shame as she contrasted her awkward manner and uncouth accent with the graceful refinement of those with whom she associated.

Far different were the sensations with which the good spinster regarded her niece. She could not often enough declare her admiration of the improvements that had taken place. Mary was grown taller, and stouter, and fairer, and fatter, and her back was as straight as an arrow, and her carriage would even surprise Miss M'Gowk herself. It was quite astonishing to see her, for she had always understood Scotland was the place for beauty, and that nobody ever came to any thing in England. Even Sir Sampson and Lady Maclaughlan were forgot as she stood rivetted in admiration, and Mary was the first to recal her recollection to them. Sir Sampson, indeed,

might well have been overlooked by a more accurate observer, for, as Grizzy observed, he was worn away to nothing, and the little that remained seemed as if it might have gone too without being any loss. He was now deaf, paralytic, and childish, and the only symptom of life he shewed was an increased restlessness and peevishness. His lady sat by him calmly pursuing her work, and, without relaxing from it, merely held up her face to salute Mary as she approached her.

"So, I'm glad you are no worse than you was, dear child," surveying her from head to foot; "that's more than *we* can say. You see these poor creatures," pointing to Sir Sampson and aunt Grizzy: "They are much about it now. Well, we known what we are, but God knows what we shall be—humph!"

Sir Sampson shewed no signs of recognizing her, but seemed pleased when Grizzy resumed her station beside him; and, be-

gan, for the five hundredth time, to tell him why he was not in Lochmarlie Castle, and why he was in Bath.

Mary now saw, that there are situations in which a weak capacity has it uses, and that the most foolish chat may sometimes impart greater pleasure than all the wisdom of the schools, even when proceeding from a benevolent heart.

Sir Sampson and Grizzy were so much upon a par in intellect, that they were reciprocally happy in each other. This the strong sense of Lady Maclaughlan had long perceived, and was the principal reason of her selecting so weak a woman as her companion; though, at the same time, in justice to her Ladyship's heart, as well as head, she had that partiality for her friend, for which no other reason can be assigned than that given by Montaigne: "Je l'amais parceque c'étoit *elle*, parceque c'étoit moi."

Mary paid a long visit to her aunt, and then took leave, promising to return the following day to take Miss Grizzy to deliver a letter of introduction she had received, and which had not been left to the chance of the carrier and the snow.

CHAPTER X.

"This sort of person is skilled to assume the appearance of all virtues, and all good qualities; but their favourite mask is universal benevolence. And the reason why they prefer this disguise to all others, is, that it tends to conceal its opposite, which is, indeed, their true character—an universal selfishness."

KNOX'S *Essays*.

ALTHOUGH, on her return, Mary read her mother's displeasure in her looks, and was grieved at again having incurred it, she yet felt it a duty towards her father to persevere in her attentions to his aunt. She was old, poor, and unknown—plain in her person—weak in her intellects—vulgar in

her manners; but she was related to her by ties more binding than the laws of fashion or the rules of taste. Even these disadvantages, which, to a worldly mind, would have served as excuses for neglecting her, to Mary's generous nature, were so many incentives to treat her with kindness and attention. Faithful to her promise, therefore, she repaired to Milsom Street, and found her aunt all impatience for her arrival, with the letter so firmly grasped in both hands, that she seemed almost afraid to trust any one with a glance at the direction.

"This letter, Mary," said she, when they were seated in the carriage, "will be a great thing for me, and especially for you. I got it from Mrs. Menzies, through Mrs. M'Drone, whose friend, Mrs. Campbell's half-sister, Miss Grant, is a great friend of Mrs. Fox's, and she says, she is a most charming woman. Of course she is no friend to the great Fox; or, you know, it would have been very odd in me, with Sir Samp-

son's principles, and my poor brother's principles, and all our own principles, to have visited her. But she's quite of a different family of Foxes: she's a Fox of Peckwell, it seems—a most amiable woman, very rich, and prodigiously charitable. I am sure we have been most fortunate in getting a letter to such a woman." And, with this heartfelt ejaculation, they found themselves at Mrs. Fox's.

Every thing corresponded with the account of this lady's wealth and consequence; the house was spacious, and handsomely furnished, with its due proportion of livery servants; and they were ushered into a sitting-room, which was filled with all the wonders of nature and art,—Indian shells—inlaid cabinets—ivory boxes—stuffed birds—old china—Chinese mandarins—stood disclosed in all their charms. The lady of the mansion was seated at a table covered with works of a different description: it exhibited the various arts of wo-

man, in regular gradation, from the painted card-rack and gilded fire-screen, to the humble thread paper and shirt-button. Mrs. Fox was a fine, fashionable looking woman, with a smooth countenance, and still smoother address. She received her visitors with that overstrained complaisance, which, to Mary's nicer tact, at once discovered that all was hollow; but poor Miss Grizzy was scarcely seated, before she was already transfixed with admiration at Mrs. Fox's politeness, and felt as if her whole life would be too short to repay such kindness. Compliments over—the weather, &c. discussed, Mrs. Fox began:

"You must be surprised, ladies, to see me in the midst of such a litter, but you find me busy arranging the works of some poor *protégéés* of mine. A most unfortunate family!—I have given them what little instruction I could in these little female works; and you see," putting a gaudy work-basket into Grizzy's hands, "it is astonishing what

progress they have made. My friends have been most liberal in their purchases of these trifles, but I own I am a wretched beggar: They are in bad hands when they are in mine, poor souls! The fact is, I can give, but I cannot beg. I tell them, they really must find somebody else to dispose of their little labours—somebody who has more of what I call the gift of begging, than I am blest with."

Tears of admiration stood in Grizzy's eye—her hand was in her pocket. She looked to Mary, but Mary's hands and eyes betrayed no corresponding emotions; she felt only disgust at the meanness and indelicacy of the mistress of such a mansion levying contributions from the stranger within her door.

Mrs. Fox proceeded: "That most benevolent woman, Miss Gull, was here this morning, and bought no less than seven of these sweet little pin-cushions. I would fain have dissuaded her from taking so

many—it really seemed such a stretch of virtue; but she said, "My dear Mrs. Fox, how can one possibly spend their money better than in doing a good action, and at the same time enriching themselves."

Grizzy's purse was in her hand. "I declare that's very true. I never thought of that before; and I'm certain Lady Maclaughlan will say the very same; and I'm sure she will be delighted—I've no doubt of that—to take a pin-cushion; and each of my sisters, I'm certain, will take one, though we have all plenty of pin-cushions; and I'll take one to myself, though I have three, I'm sure, that I've never used yet."

"My dear Miss Douglas, you really are, I could almost say, *too* good. Two and two's four, and one's five—five half crowns! My poor *protégéés!* you will really be the making of their fortune!"

Grizzy, with trembling hands, and a face flushed with conscious virtue, drew forth the money from her little hoard.

But Mrs. Fox did not quit her prey so easily. "If any of your friends are in want of shirt-buttons, Miss Douglas, I would fain recommend those to them. They are made by a poor woman in whom I take some interest, and are far superior to any that are to be had from the shops. They are made from the very best materials. Indeed, I take care of that, as" (in a modest whisper) "I furnish her with the materials myself; but the generality of those you get to purchase are made from old materials. I've ascertained that, and it's a fact you may rely upon."

Poor Grizzy's hair stood on end, to hear of such depravity in a sphere where she had never even suspected it; but, for the honour of her country, she flattered herself such practices were there unknown; and she was entering upon a warm vindication of the integrity of Scotch shirt-buttons, when Mrs. Fox coolly observed :

"Indeed, our friend Miss Grant was so conscious of the great superiority of these buttons over any others, that she bespoke thirty-six dozen of them to take to Scotland with her. In fact, they are the real good old fashioned shirt-buttons, such as I have heard my mother talk of; and for all that, I make a point of my poor woman selling them a penny a dozen below the shop price; so that in taking twelve dozen, which is the common quantity, there is a shilling saved at once."

Grizzy felt as if she would be the saving of the family by the purchase of these incomparable shirt-buttons, and putting down her five shillings, became the happy possessor of twelve dozen of them.

Fresh expressions of gratitude and admiration ensued, till Grizzy's brain began to whirl, even more rapidly than usual, at the thought of the deeds she had done.

"And now," said Mrs. Fox, observing her eyes in a fine frenzy rolling from her lapful

of pin-cushions and shirt-buttons, to a mandarin nearly as large as life, "perhaps, my dear Miss Douglas, you will do me the favour to take a look of my little collection."

"Favour!" thought Grizzy; "what politeness!" and she protested there was nothing she liked so much as to look at every thing, and that it would be the greatest favour to shew her any thing. The mandarin was made to shake his head—a musical snuff-box played its part—and a variety of other expensive toys were also exhibited.

Mary's disgust increased. "And this woman," thought she, "professes to be charitable amidst all this display of selfish extravagance. Probably the price of one of these costly baubles would have provided for the whole of these poor people, for whom she affects so much compassion, without subjecting her to the meanness of turning her house into a beggar's repository." And she walked away to the other end of the

room, to examine some fine scriptural paintings.

"Here," said Mrs. Fox to her victim, as she unlocked a superb cabinet, "is what I value more than my whole collection put together: It is my specimens of Scotch pebbles; and I owe them solely to the generosity and good will of my Scotch friends. I assure you, that is a proud reflection to me. I am a perfect enthusiast in Scotch pebbles, and, I may say, in Scotch people. In fact, I am an enthusiast in whatever I am interested in; and at present, I must own, my heart is set upon making a complete collection of Scotch pebbles."

Grizzy began to feel a sort of tightness at her throat, at which was affixed a very fine pebble brooch pertaining to Nicky, but lent to Grizzy, to enable her to make a more distinguished figure in the gay world. "Oh!" thought she, "what a pity this brooch is Nicky's, and not mine; I would

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARA...

have given it to this charming Mrs. Fox. Indeed, I don't see how I can be off giving it to her, even although it is Nicky's."

"And, by the bye," exclaimed Mrs. Fox, as if suddenly struck with the sight of the brooch, "that seems a very fine stone of your's. I wonder I did not observe it sooner; but, indeed, pebbles are thrown away in dress. May I beg a nearer view of it?"

Grizzy's brain was now all on fire. On the one hand, there was the glory of presenting the brooch to such a polite, charitable, charming woman; on the other, there was the fear of Nicky's indignation: But then it was quite thrown away upon Nicky—she had no cabinet, and Mrs. Fox had declared that pebbles were quite lost any where but in cabinets, and it was a thousand pities that Nicky's brooch should be lost. All these thoughts Grizzy revolved with her usual clearness, as she unclasped the brooch, and gave it into the hand of the collector.

"Bless me, my dear Miss Douglas, this is really a very fine stone! I had no conception of it when I saw it sticking in your throat. It looks quite a different thing in the hand: It is a species I am really not acquainted with. I have nothing at all similar to it in my poor collection. Pray, can you tell me the name of it, and where it is found, that I may at least endeavour to procure a piece of it."

"I'm sure, I wish to goodness my sister Nicky was here—I'm certain she would—though, to be sure, she has a great regard for it; for it was found on the Glenfern estate, the very day my grandfather won his plea against Drimsydie; and we always called it the lucky stone from that."

"The lucky stone! what a delightful name! I shall never think myself in luck till I can procure a piece of your lucky stone. I protest, I could almost go to Scotland on purpose. Oh, you dear lucky stone!" kissing it with rapture.

" I'm sure—I'm almost certain—indeed I'm convinced, if my sister Nicky was here, she would be delighted to offer—It would certainly be doing my sister Nicky the greatest favour, since you think it would be seen to so much greater advantage in your cabinet, which, for my own part, I have not the least doubt of, as certainly my sister Nicky very seldom wears it for fear of losing it, and it would be a thousand pities if it was lost; and, to be sure, it will be much safer locked up—nobody can dispute that—so I am sure its by far the best thing my sister Nicky can do—for certainly a pebble brooch is quite lost as a brooch."

" My dear Miss Douglas! I am really quite ashamed! This is a perfect robbery, I protest! But I must insist upon your accepting some little token of my regard for Miss Nicky in return." Going to her charity-table, and returning with a set of painted thread papers, " I must request the fa-

vour of you to present these to Miss Nicky, with my kind regards, and assure her I shall consider her lucky stone as the most precious jewel in my possession."

The whole of this scene had been performed with such rapidity, that poor Grizzy was not prepared for the sudden metamorphose of Nicky's pebble brooch into a set of painted threadpapers, and some vague alarms began to float through her brain.

Mary now advanced, quite unconscious of what had being going on; and having whispered her aunt to take leave, they departed. They returned in silence. Grizzy was so occupied in examining her pincushions, and counting her buttons, that she never looked up till the carriage stopped in Milsom Street.

Mary accompanied her in. Grizzy was all impatience to display her treasures; and as she hastily unfolded them, began to relate her achievements. Lady Maclaughlan heard her in silence and a deep groan

was all that she uttered; but Grizzy was too well accustomed to be groaned at, to be at all appalled, and went on, "But all that's nothing to the shirt-buttons, made of Mrs. Fox's own linen, and only five shillings the twelve dozen; and considering what tricks are played with shirt-buttons now—I assure you, people require to be on their guard with shirt-buttons now."

"Pray, my dear, did you ever read the Vicar of Wakefield?"

"The Vicar of Wakefield? I—I think always I must have read it;—at any rate, I'm certain I've heard of it."

"Moses and his green spectacles was as one of the acts of Solomon compared to you and your shirt-buttons. Pray, which of you is it that wears shirts?"

"I declare that's very true—I wonder I did not think of that sooner—to be sure none of us wear shirts since my poor brother died."

"And what's become of her brooch?" turning to Mary, who for the first time observed the departure of Nicky's crown jewel.

"O, as to the brooch," cried Grizzy, "I'm certain you'll all think that well bestowed, and certainly it has been the saving of it." Upon which she commenced a most entangled narrative, from which the truth was at length extracted.

"Well," said Lady Maclaughlan, "there are two things, God grant I may never become, an *amateur* in charity, and a collector of curiosities. No Christian can be either —both are pick-pockets. I would'nt keep company with my own mother were she either one or other—humph!"

Mary was grieved at the loss of the brooch; but Grizzy seemed more than ever satisfied with the exchange, as Sir Sampson had taken a fancy for the thread papers, and it would amuse him for the rest

of the day to be told every two minutes what they were intended for. Mary, therefore, left her quite happy, and returned to Beech Park.

CHAPTER XI.

> "He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small,
> Who dares not put it to the touch,
> To gain or lose it all."
>
> *Marquis of* MONTROSE.

TIME rolled on, but no event occurred in Grizzy's life worthy of being commemorated. Lady Juliana began to recover from the shock of her arrival, and at length was even prevailed upon to pay her a visit, and actually spent five minutes in the same room with her. All her Ladyship's plans seemed now on the point of being accom-

plished. Mr. Downe Wright was now Lord Glenallan, with an additional fifteen thousand per annum, and by wiser heads than her's, would have been thought an unexceptionable match for any young woman. Leaving his mother to settle his affairs in Scotland, to which she was much more *au fait* than himself, he hastened to Beech Park to claim Mary's promised hand.

But neither wealth nor grandeur possessed any sway over Mary's well-regulated mind, and she turned from that species of happiness which she felt would be insufficient to satisfy the best affections of her heart. "No," thought she, "it is not in splendour and distinction that I shall find happiness; it is in the cultivation of the domestic virtues—the peaceful joys of a happy home, and a loved companion, that my felicity must consist. Without these, I feel that I should still be poor, were I mistress of millions;" and she took the first opportu-

nity of acquainting Lord Glenallan with the nature of her sentiments.

He received the communication with painful surprise ; but as he was one of those who do not easily divest themselves of an idea that has once taken possession of their brain, he seemed resolved to persevere in his quiet, though pointed attentions.

Lady Juliana's anger at the discovery of her daughter's refusal, it is needless to describe—it may easily be imagined; and poor Mary was almost heart-broken by the violence and duration of it. Sometimes she wavered in her ideas, as to whether she was doing right in thus resisting her mother's wishes ; and in the utmost distress she mentioned her scruples to Lady Emily.

" As to Lady Juliana's wishes," said her cousin, " they are mere soap bubbles ; but as to your own views—why, really you are somewhat of a riddle to me. I rather think, were I such a quiet, civil, well disposed per-

son as you, I could have married Lord Glenallan well enough. He is handsome, good-natured, and rich; and though 'he is but a Lord, and nothing but a Lord,' still there is a dash and bustle in twenty thousand a year, that takes off from the *ennui* of a dull companion. With five hundred a year, I grant you, he would be execrable."

"Then I shall never marry a man with twenty thousand a year, whom I would not have with five hundred."

"In short, you are to marry for love—that's the old story, which, with all your wisdom, you wise, well educated girls always end in. Where shall I find a hero upon five hundred a year for you? Of course he must be virtuous, noble, dignified, handsome, brave, witty. What would you think of Charles Lennox?"

Mary coloured. "After what passed, I would not marry Colonel Lennox—no," affecting to smile, "not if he were to ask me,

which is certainly the most unlikely of all things."

"Ah! true, I had forgot that scrape. No, that won't do—it certainly would be most pitiful in you, after what passed—Well, I don't know what's to be done with you: There's nothing for it but that you should take Lord Glenallan, with all his imperfections on his head; and, after all, I really see nothing that he wants but a little more brain, and, as you'll have the managing of him, you can easily supply that deficiency."

"Indeed," answered Mary, "I find I have quite little enough for myself, and I have no genius whatever for managing. I shall, therefore, never marry, unless I marry a man on whose judgment I could rely for advice and assistance, and for whom I could feel a certain deference, that I consider due from a wife to her husband."

"I see what you would be at," said Lady Emily; "you mean to model yourself

upon the behaviour of Mrs. Tooley, who has such a deference for the judgment of her better half, that she consults him even about the tying of her shoes, and would not presume to give her child a few grains of magnesia without his full and unqualified approbation. Now, I flatter myself, my husband and I shall have a more equitable division; for, though man is a reasonable being, he shall know and own that woman is so too—sometimes. All things that men ought to know better I shall yield: Whatever may belong to either sex, I either seize upon as my prerogative, or scrupulously divide; for which reason, I should like the profession of my husband to be something in which I could not possibly interfere. How difficult must it be for a woman in the lower ranks of life to avoid teaching her husband how to sew, if he is a tailor; or how to bake, if he is a baker," &c.

"Nature seems to have provided for this tendency of both sexes, by making your sensible men—that is, men who think themselves sensible, and wish every body else to think the same—incline to foolish women. I can detect one of these sensible husbands at a glance, by the pomp and formality visible in every word, look, or action: Men, in short, whose 'visages do cream and mantle like a standing pond;' who are perfect Joves in their own houses—who speak their will by a nod, and lay down the law by the motion of their eye-brow—and who attach prodigious ideas of dignity to frightening their children, and being worshipped by their wives, till you see one of these wiseacres looking as if he thought himself, and his obsequious helpmate, were exact personifications of Adam and Eve—'he for God only, she for God in him.' Now, I am much afraid, Mary, with all your sanctity, you are in some danger of becoming one of these idolatresses."

"I hope not," replied Mary, laughing; "but if I should, that seems scarcely so bad as the sect of Independents in the marriage state; for example, there is Mrs. Boston, who by all strangers is taken for a widow, such emphasis does she lay upon the personal pronoun—with her, 'tis always, *I* do this, or *I* do that, without the slightest reference to her husband; and she talks of *my* house, *my* gardens, *my* carriage, *my* children, as if there were no copartnery in the case."

"Ah, she is very odious," cried Lady Emily, "she is both master and mistress, and more if possible—she makes her husband look like her footman; but she is a fool, as every woman must needs be, who thinks she can raise herself by lowering her husband. Then, there is the sect of the Wranglers, whose marriage is only one continued dispute: But, in short, I see it is reserved for me to set a perfect example to my sex in the married state. But I'm

more reasonable than you, I suspect; for I don't insist upon having a bright genius for my mate."

"I confess, I should like that my husband's genius was at least as bright as my own," said Mary, "and I can't think there is any thing unreasonable in that; or rather, I should say, were I a genius myself, I could better dispense with a certain portion of intellect in my husband: as it has been generally remarked, that those who are largely endowed themselves, can easier dispense with talents in their companions, than others of more moderate endowments can do; but virtue and talents on the one side, virtue and tenderness on the other, I look upon as the principal ingredients in a happy union."

"Well, I intend to be excessively happy; and yet I don't think Edward will ever find the longitude. And, as for my tenderness—humph!—as your Lady M'Laughlan says; but as for you—I rather think you're in

some danger of turning into an aunt Grizzy, with a long waist and large pockets, peppermint drops, and powdered curls; but, whatever you do, for heaven's sake, let us have no more human sacrifices—if you do, I shall certainly appear at your wedding in sackcloth."—And this was all of comfort or advice that her ladyship could bestow.

As Lady Emily was not a person who concealed either her own secrets or those of others, Colonel Lennox was not long of hearing from her what had passed, and of being made thoroughly acquainted with Mary's sentiments on love and marriage. "Such a heart must be worth winning," thought he; but he sighed to think that he had less chance for the prize than another. Independent of his narrow fortune, which, he was aware, would be an insuperable bar to obtaining Lady Juliana's consent, Mary's coldness and reserve towards him, seemed to increase rather than dimi-

nish. Or if she sometimes gave way to the natural frankness and gaiety of her disposition before him, a word or look expressive of admiration on his part, instantly recalled to her those painful ideas which had been for a moment forgot, and seemed to throw him at a greater distance than ever.

Colonel Lennox was too noble minded himself, to suppose, for an instant, that Mary actually felt dislike towards him; because, at the commencement of their acquaintance, he had not done justice to her merits; but he was also aware, that, until he had explained to her the nature of his sentiments, she must naturally regard his attentions with suspicion, and consider them rather as acts of duty towards his mother, than as the spontaneous expression of his own attachment. He therefore in the most simple and candid manner, laid open to her the secret of his heart, and in all the eloquence of real passion, poured forth those

feelings of love and admiration, with which she had unconsciously inspired him

For a moment, Mary's distrust was overcome by the ardour of his address, and the open manly manner in which he had avowed the rise and progress of his attachment; and she yielded herself up to the delightful conviction of loving and being beloved.

But soon that gave way to the mortifying reflection that rushed over her mind. "He *has* tried to love me!" thought she; "but it is in obedience to his mother's wish, and he thinks he has succeeded. No, no; I cannot be the dupe of his delusion—I will not give myself to one who has been solicited to love me!" And again wounded delicacy and woman's pride resumed their empire over her, and she rejected the idea of *ever* receiving Colonel Lennox as a lover. He heard her determination with the deepest anguish, and used every argument and entreaty to soften her resolution;

but Mary had wrought herself up to a pitch of heroism—she had rejected the man she loved—the only man she ever *could* love—that done, to persist in the sacrifice seemed easy; and they parted with increased attachment in their hearts, even though those hearts seemed severed for ever.

Soon after he set off to join his regiment; and it was only in saying farewell! that Mary felt how deeply her happiness was involved in the fate of the man she had for ever renounced. To no one did she impart what had passed; and Lady Emily was too dull herself, for some days after the departure of her friend, to take any notice of Mary's dejection.

CHAPTER XII.

> "What taught the parrot to cry, hail?
> What taught the chattering pie his tale?
> Hunger; that sharpener of the wits,
> Which gives e'en fools some thinking fits."
>
> DRUMMOND'S *Persius*.

MARY found herself bereft of both her lovers nearly at the same time. Lord Glenallan, after formally renewing his suit, at length took a final leave, and returned to Scotland. Lady Juliana's indignation could only be equalled by Dr. Redgill's upon the occasion. He had planned a snug retreat for himself during the game season at Glenallan Castle; where, from the good nature

and easy temper of both master and mistress, he had no doubt but that he should in time come to *rule the roast*, and be lord paramount over kitchen and larder. His disappointment was therefore great at finding all the solid joys of red deer and moor-game, kippered salmon and mutton hams, 'vanish like the baseless fabric of a vision,' leaving not a wreck behind.

"Refused Lord Glenallan!" exclaimed he to Lady Emily, upon first hearing of it. "The thing's incredible—absolutely impossible—I won't believe it!"

"That's right, Doctor; who is it that says 'and still believe the story false that *ought* not to be true?' I admire your candour, and wish I could imitate it."

"Then your Ladyship really believes it. 'Pon my soul, I—I—it's really a very vexatious affair. I feel for Lady Juliana, poor woman! No wonder she's hysterical—five and twenty thousand a year refused! What is it she would have? The finest deer park

in Scotland! Every sort of game upon the estate! A salmon-fishing at the very door! —I should just like to know what *is* the meaning of it?"

"Cannot you guess, Doctor?" asked Lady Emily.

"Guess! No, 'pon my soul! I defy any man to guess what could tempt a woman to refuse five and twenty thousand a year; unless, indeed, she has something higher in view, and even then she should be pretty sure of her mark. But I suppose, because Miss Adelaide has got a Duke, she thinks she must have one too. I suppose that's the story; but I can tell her Dukes are not so plenty; and she's by no means so fine a woman as her sister, and her market's spoilt, or I'm much mistaken. What man in his senses would ever ask a woman, who had been such an idiot as to refuse five and twenty thousand a year?"

"I see, Doctor, you are quite a novice in the tender passion. Cannot you make

allowance for a young lady's not being in love?"

"In what?" demanded the Doctor.

"In love," repeated Lady Emily.

"Love! Bah—nonsense—no mortal in their senses ever thinks of such stuff now."

"Then you think love and madness are one and the same thing it seems?"

"I think the man or woman who could let their love stand in the way of five and twenty thousand a year, is the next thing to being mad," said the Doctor warmly; "and in this case I can see no difference."

"But you'll allow there are some sorts of love that may be indulged, without casting any shade upon the understanding?"

"I really can't tell what your Ladyship means," said the Doctor impatiently.

"I mean, for example, the love one may feel towards a turtle, such as we had lately."

"That's quite a different thing," interrupted the Doctor.

"Pardon me, but whatever the consequence may be, the effects in both cases were very similar, as exemplified in yourself. Pray, what difference did it make to your friends, who were deprived of your society, whether you spent your time in walking with 'even step, and musing gait,' before your dulcinea's window, or the turtle's cistern?—whether you were engrossed in composing a sonnet to your mistress' eye-brow, or in contriving a new method of heightening the enjoyments of *calipash?*—whether you expatiated with greater rapture on the charms of a white skin, or green fat?—whether you were most devoted to a languishing or a lively beauty?—whether ——"

"'Pon my honour, Lady Emily, I really—I—I—can't conceive what it is you mean. There's a time for every thing; and I'm sure nobody but yourself would ever have thought of bringing in a turtle to a conversation upon marriage."

" On the contrary, Doctor, I thought it had been upon love; and I was endeavouring to convince you, that even the wisest of men may be susceptible of certain tender emotions towards a beloved object."

" You'll never convince me that any but a fool can be in love," cried the Doctor, his visage assuming a darker purple as the argument advanced.

" Then you must rank Lord Glenallan, with his five and twenty thousand a year, amongst the number, for he is desperately in love, I assure you."

" As to that, Lord Glenallan, or any man with his fortune, may be whatever he chooses. He has a right to be in love. He can afford to be in love."

" I have heard much of the torments of love," said Lady Emily; " but I never heard it rated as a luxury before. I hope there is no chance of your being made premier, otherwise I fear we should have a tax upon love-marriages immediately."

"It would be greatly for the advantage of the nation, as well as the comfort of individuals, if there was," returned the Doctor. "Many a pleasant fellow has been lost to society, by what you call a love-marriage. I speak from experience. I was obliged to drop the oldest friend I had, upon his making one of your love-marriages."

"What! were you afraid of the effects of evil example?" asked Lady Emily.

"No—it was not for that; but he asked me to take a family dinner with him one day, and I, without knowing any thing of the character of the woman he had married, was weak enough to go. I found a very so so table cloth, and a shoulder of mutton, which ended our acquaintance. I never entered his door after it. In fact, no man's happiness is proof against dirty table-cloths and bad dinners; and you may take my word for it, Lady Emily, these are the invariable accompaniments of your love-marriages."

"Pshaw! that is only amongst the *bourgeois*," said Lady Emily affectedly; "that is not the sort of *ménage* I mean to have. Here is to be the style of my domestic establishment;" and she repeated Shenstone's beautiful pastoral—

"My banks they are furnished with bees," &c.

till she came to—

"I have found out a gift for my fair,
I have found where the wood-pigeons breed."

"There's some sense in that," cried the Doctor, who had been listening with great weariness. "You may have a good pigeon pye, or *un sauté de pigeons au sang*, which is still better when well dressed."

"Shocking!" exclaimed Lady Emily; "to mention pigeon pies in the same breath with nightingales and roses!"

"I'll tell you what, Lady Emily, it's just these sort of nonsensical descriptions that do all the mischief amongst you young ladies. It's these confounded poets that turn

all your heads, and make you think you have nothing to do after you are married, but sit beside fountains and grottos, and divert yourself with birds and flowers, instead of looking after your servants, and paying your butcher's bills; and, after all, what is the substance of that trash you have just been reading, but to say that the man was a substantial farmer and grazier, and had bees; though I never heard of any man in his senses going to sleep amongst his bee-hives before. 'Pon my soul! if I had my will, I would burn every line of poetry that ever was written. A good recipe for a pudding is worth all that your Shenstone's, and the whole set of them, ever wrote; and there's more good sense and useful information in this book," rapping his knuckles against a volume he held in his hand, " than in all your poets, ancient and modern."

Lady Emily took it out of his hand, and opened it.

"And some very poetical description too, Doctor; although you affect to despise it so much. Here is an eulogium on the partridge. I doubt much if St. Preux ever made a finer on his adorable Julie;" and she read as follows:—

"La Perdrix tient le premier rang après la Bécasse, dans la cathégorie des gibiers à plumes. C'est, lorsqu'elle est rouge, l'un des plus honorables et des meilleurs rôtis qui puissent être étalés sur une table gourmande. Sa forme appétissante, sa taille élégante et svelte, quoiqu' arrondie, son embonpoint modéré, ses jambes d'écarlate; enfin, son fumet divin et ses qualités restaurantes, tout concourt à la faire rechercher des vrais amateurs. D'autres gibiers sont plus rares, plus chers, mieux accueillis par la vanité, le prejuge, et la mode; la Perdrix rouge, belle de sa propre beauté, dont les qualités sont indépendantes de la fantaisie, qui réunit en sa personne tout ce qui peut charmer les yeux, délecter le pa-

lais, stimuler l'appétit, et ranimer les forces, plaira dans tous les temps, et concourra à l'honneur de tous les festins, sous quelque forme qu'elle y paroisse." *

The Doctor sighed: "That's nothing to what he says of the woodcock:" and with trembling hands he turned over the leaves, till he found the place. "Here it is," said he, "page 88, chap. xvi. Just be so good as read that, Lady Emily, and say, whether it is not infamous that Monsieur Grillade has never even attempted to make it."

With an air of melancholy enthusiasm she read—'Dans les pays où les Bécasses sont communes, on obtient, de leurs carcasses pilées dans un mortier, une purée sur laquelle on dresse diverses entrées, telles que de petites côtelettes de mouton, &c. Cette purée est l'une des plus délicieuses choses qui puisse être introduite dans le palais d'un gourmand, et l'on peut assurer que

* Manuel des Amphitryons.

quiconque n'en a point mangé n'a point connu les joies du paradis terrestre. Úne purée de Bécasse, bien faite, est le *ne plus ultrâ* des jouissances humaines. Il faut mourir après l'avoir goutèe, car toutes les autres alors ne paroitront plus qu'insipides."

"And these *bécasses*, these woodcocks, perfectly swarm on the Glenallan estate in the season," cried the Doctor; "and to think that such a man should have been refused—But Miss Mary will repent this the longest day she lives. I had a cook in my eye for them, too—one who is quite up to the making of this *purée*. 'Pon my soul! she deserves to live upon sheep's head and haggis for the rest of her life; and if I was Lady Juliana, I would try the effect of bread and water."

"She certainly does not aspire to such joys as are here pourtrayed in this *your* book of life," said Lady Emily; "for I sus-

pect she could endure existence even upon roast mutton, with the man she loves."

"That's nothing to the purpose, unless the man she loves, as you call it, loves to live upon roast mutton too. Take my word for it, unless she gives her husband good dinners, he'll not care twopence for her in a week's time. I look upon bad dinners to be the source of much of the misery we hear of in the married life. Women are much mistaken, if they think it's by dressing themselves they are to please their husbands."

"Pardon me, Doctor, we must be the best judges there, and I have the authority of all ages and sages in my favour: The beauty and the charms of women have been the favourite theme, time immemorial; now, no one ever heard of a fair one being celebrated for her skill in cookery."

"There I beg leave to differ from you," said the Doctor, with an air of exultation,

again referring to his *text-book* ; " here is the great Madame Pompadour, celebrated for a single dish : 'Les tendrons d'agneau au soleil et à la Pompadour, sont sortis de l'imagination de cette dame célèbre, pour entrer dans la bouche d'un Roi.'"

" But it was Love that inspired her—it was Love that kindled the fire in her imagination. In short, you must acknowledge that

'Love rules the court, the camp, the grove.'"

" I'll acknowledge no such thing," cried the Doctor, with indignation. " Love rule the camp indeed ! A very likely story ! Don't I know that all our first Generals carry off the best cooks—that there's no such living any where as in camp—that their *aides-de-camp* are quite ruined by it—that in time of war they live at the rate of twenty thousand a year, and when they come home they can't get a dinner they can eat ! As for the Court, I don't pretend to

know much about it; but I suspect there's more cooks than Cupids to be seen about it. And for the groves, I shall only say I never heard of any of your *fêtes champêtre*, or *pic-nics*, where all the pleasure didn't seem to consist in the eating and drinking."

"Ah, Doctor! I perceive you have taken all your ideas on that subject from Werter, who certainly was a sort of a sentimental *gourmand*, he seems to have enjoyed so much drinking his coffee under the shade of the lime-trees, and going to the kitchen to make his own pease soup; and then he breaks out into such raptures at the idea of the illustrious lovers of Penelope killing and dressing their own meat! Butchers and cooks in one! only conceive them with their great knives and blue aprons, or their spits and white nightcaps! Poor Penelope! no wonder she preferred making webs to marrying one of these creatures! Faugh! I must have an ounce of civet to sweeten my imagination." And she

flew off, leaving the Doctor to con over the *Manuel des Amphitryons*, and sigh at the mention of joys, sweet, yet mournful, to his soul.

CHAPTER XIII.

> "The ample proposition that hope makes
> In all designs begun on earth below,
> Fails in the promised largeness."
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

THERE is no saying whether the Doctor's system might not have been resorted to, had not Lady Juliana's wrath been for the present suspended by an invitation to Altamont House. True, nothing could be colder than the terms in which it was couched;

but to that her Ladyship was insensible, and would have been equally indifferent, had she known that, such as it was, she owed it more to the obstinacy of her son-in-law, than the affection of her daughter. The Duke of Altamont was one of those who attach great ideas of dignity to always carrying their point; and though he might sometimes be obliged to suspend his plans, he never had been known to relinquish them. Had he settled in his own mind to tie his neckcloth in a particular way, not all the eloquence of Cicero, or the tears of O'Neil, would have induced him to alter it; and Adelaide, the haughty self-willed Adelaide, soon found, that of all yokes, the most insupportable is the yoke of an obstinate fool. In the thousand trifling occurrences of domestic life (for his Grace was interested in all the minutiæ of his establishment,) where good sense and good humour on either side would have gracefully yielded to the other, there was a perpetual contest

for dominion, which invariably ended in Adelaide's defeat. The Duke indeed never disputed, or reasoned, or even replied; but the thing was done: till at the end of six weeks, the Duchess of Altamont most heartily hated and despised the man she had so lately vowed to love and obey. On the present occasion, his Grace certainly appeared in the most amiable light, in wishing to have Lady Juliana invited to his house; but, in fact, it proceeded entirely from his besetting sin, obstinacy. He had proposed her accompanying her daughter at the time of her marriage, and been overruled; but with all the pertinacity of a little mind, he had kept fast hold of the idea, merely because it was his own, and he was now determined to have it put in execution. In a postcript to the letter, and in the same cordial style, the Duchess said something of a hope, that *if* her mother did come to town, Mary should accompany her; but this her Ladyship, to Mary's

great relief, declared should not be, although she certainly was very much at a loss how to dispose of her. Mary timidly expressed her wish to be permitted to return to Lochmarlie, and mentioned that her uncle and aunt had repeatedly offered to come to Bath for her, if she might be allowed to accompany them home; but to this her mother also gave a decided negative, adding that she never should see Lochmarlie again, if she could help it. In short, she must remain where she was, till something could be fixed as to her future destination. "It was most excessively tiresome to be clogged with a great unmarried daughter," her Ladyship observed, as she sprung into the carriage, with a train of dogs, and drove off to dear delightful London.

But alas! the insecurity of even the best laid schemes of human foresight! Lady Juliana was in the midst of arrangements for endless pleasures, when she received accounts of the death of her now almost for-

gotten husband ! He had died from the gradual effects of the climate, and that was all that remained to be told of the unfortunate Henry Douglas ! If his heartless wife shed some natural tears, she wiped them soon ; but the wounds of disappointment and vanity were not so speedily effaced, as she contrasted the brilliant court-dress with the unbecoming widow's cap. Oh, she so detested black things—it was so hateful to wear mourning—she never could feel happy or comfortable in black ! and, at such a time, how particularly unfortunate ! Poor Douglas ! she was very sorry !—And so ended the holiest and most indissoluble of human ties !

The Duchess did not think it incumbent upon her to be affected by the death of a person she had never seen ; but she put on mourning ; put off her presentation at Court for a week, and staid away one night from the opera.

On Mary's warm and unpolluted heart, the tidings of her father's death produced a very different effect. Though she had never known, in their fullest extent, those feelings of filial affection, whose source begins with our being, and over which memory loves to linger, as at the hallowed fount of the purest of earthly joys, she had yet been taught to cherish a fond remembrance of him to whom she owed her being. She had been brought up in the land of his birth —his image was associated in her mind, with many of the scenes most dear to her —his name and his memory were familiar to those amongst whom she dwelt, and thus her feelings of natural affection had been preserved in all their genuine warmth and tenderness. Many a letter, and many a little token of her love, she had, from her earliest years, been accustomed to send him; and she had ever fondly cherished the hope of her father's return, and that she would yet know the happiness of being blest in a

parent's love. But now all these hopes were extinguished; and, while she wept over them in bitterness of heart, she yet bowed with pious resignation to the decree of heaven.

CHAPTER XIV.

——"Shall we grieve their hovering shades,
Which wait the revolution in our hearts?
Shall we disdain their silent, soft address;
Their posthumous advice and pious prayer?"

YOUNG.

For some months all was peaceful seclusion in Mary's life, and the only varieties she knew were occasional visits to aunt Grizzy's, and now and then spending some days with Mrs. Lennox. She saw, with sorrow, the declining health of her venerable friend, whose wasted form and delicate

features had now assumed an almost ethereal aspect. Yet she never complained, and it was only from her languor and weakness that Mary guessed she suffered. When urged to have recourse to medical advice, she only smiled and shook her head; yet, ever gentle and complying to the wishes of others, she was at length prevailed upon to receive the visits of a medical attendant, and her own feelings were but too faithfully confirmed by his opinion. Being an old friend of the family, he took upon himself to communicate the intelligence to her son, then abroad with his regiment; and in the meantime Mary took up her residence at Rose Hall, and devoted herself unceasingly to the beloved friend she felt she was so soon to lose.

"Ah! Mary," she would sometimes say, "God forgive me! but my heart is not yet weaned from worldly wishes. Even now, when I feel all the vanity of human hapdiness, I think how it would have soothed

my last moments could I have but seen you my son's before I left the world! Yet, alas! our time here is so short, that it matters little whether it be spent in joy or grief, provided it be spent in innocence and virtue. Mine has been a long life compared to many; but when I look back upon it, what a span it seems! And it is not the remembrance of its brightest days that are now a solace to my heart. Dearest Mary, if you live long, you will live to think of the sad hours you have given me, as the fairest, perhaps, of many a happy day that, I trust, heaven has yet in store for you. Yes! God has made some whose powers are chiefly ordained to comfort the afflicted, and in fulfilling his will you must surely be blest."

Mary listened to the half-breathed wishes of her dear old friend with painful feelings of regret and self-reproach.

"Charles Lennox loved me," thought she, "truly, tenderly loved me; and had I

but repaid his noble frankness—had I suffered him to read my heart when he laid his open before me, I might now have gladdened the last days of the mother he adores. I might have proudly avowed that affection I must now for ever hide."

But, at the end of some weeks, Mrs. Lennox was no longer susceptible of emotions, either of joy or sorrow. She gradually sunk into a state of almost total insensibility, from which not even the arrival of her son had power to rouse her. His anguish was extreme at finding his mother in a condition so perfectly hopeless; and every other idea seemed, for the present, absorbed in his anxiety for her. As Mary witnessed his watchful cares, and tender solicitude, she could almost have envied the unconscious object of such devoted attachment.

A few days after his arrival, his leave of absence was abruptly recalled, and he was summoned to repair to head-quarters with all

possible expedition. The army was on the move, and a battle was expected to be fought. At such a time, hesitation or delay, under any circumstances, would have been inevitable disgrace; and, dreadful as was the alternative, Colonel Lennox wavered not an instant in his resolution. With a look of fixed agony, but without uttering a syllable, he put the letter into Mary's hand as she sat by his mother's bedside, and then left the room to order preparations to be made for his instant departure. On his return, Mary witnessed the painful conflict of his feelings in his extreme agitation, as he approached his mother, to look, for the last time, on those features, already moulded into more than mortal beauty. A bright ray of the setting sun streamed full upon that face, now reposing in the awful but hallowed calm which is sometimes diffused around the bed of death. The sacred stillness was only broken by the evening song

of the blackbird, and the distant lowing of the cattle—sounds which had often brought pleasure to that heart, now insensible to all human emotion. All nature shone forth in gaiety and splendour, but the eye and the ear were alike closed against all earthly objects. Yet who can tell the brightness of those visions with which the parting soul may be visited? Sounds and sights, alike unheard, unknown to mortal sense, may then hold divine communion with the soaring spirit, and inspire it with bliss inconceivable, ineffable!

Colonel Lennox gazed upon the countenance of his mother. Again and again he pressed her inanimate hands to his lips, and bedewed them with his tears, as about to tear himself from her for ever.—At that moment she opened her eyes, and regarded him with a look of intelligence, which spoke at once to his heart. He felt that he was seen and known. Her look was long, and fondly fixed upon his face; then turned to

Mary with an expression so deep and earnest, that both felt the instantaneous appeal. The veil seemed to drop from their hearts; one glance sufficed to tell that both were fondly, truly loved; and as Colonel Lennox received Mary's almost fainting form in his arms, he knelt by his mother, and implored her blessing on her children. A smile of angelic brightness beamed upon her face as she extended her hand towards them, and her lips moved as in prayer, though no sound escaped them. One long and lingering look was given to those so dear even in death. She then raised her eyes to heaven, and the spirit sought its native skies !

CHAPTER XV.

"Cette liaison n'est ni passion ni amitié pure : elle fait une classe à part."

LA BRUYERE.

It was long before Mary could believe in the reality of what had passed. It appeared to her as a beautiful, yet awful, dream. Could it be, that she had plighted her faith by the bed of death; that the last look of her departed friend had hallowed the vow now registered in heaven; that Charles Lennox had claimed her as his own, even in the agony of tearing himself from all he

loved; and that she had only felt how dear she was to him at the very moment when she had parted from him, perhaps for ever! But Mary strove to banish these overwhelming thoughts from her mind, as she devoted herself to the performance of the last duties to her departed friend. These paid, she again returned to Beech Park.

Lady Emily had been a daily visitor at Rose Hall during Mrs. Lennox's illness, and had taken a lively interest in the situation of the family; but, notwithstanding, it was some time before Mary could so far subdue her feelings as to speak with composure of what had passed. She felt, too, how impossible it was, by words, to convey to her any idea of that excitement of mind, where a whole life of ordinary feeling seems concentrated in one sudden but ineffable emotion. All that had passed might be imagined, but could not be told; and she shrunk from the task of pourtraying those deep and sacred feelings, which lan-

guage never could impart to the breast of another.

Yet she felt it was using her cousin unkindly to keep her in ignorance of what she was certain would give her pleasure to hear; and, summoning her resolution, she at length disclosed to her all that had taken place. Her own embarrassment was too great to allow her to remark Lady Emily's changing colour, as she listened to her communication; and after it was ended, she remained silent for some minutes, evidently struggling with her emotions.

At length she exclaimed indignantly—"And so it seems Colonel Lennox and you have all this time been playing the dying lover, and the cruel mistress to each other? How I detest such duplicity! and duplicity with me! My heart was ever open to you, to him, to the whole world; while yours——nay, your very faces were masked to me!"

Mary was too much confounded by her cousin's reproaches to be able to reply to them for some time; and when she did attempt to vindicate herself, she found it was in vain. Lady Emily refused to listen to her; and, in haughty displeasure, quitted the room, leaving poor Mary overwhelmed with sorrow and amazement.

There was a simplicity of heart, a singleness of idea in herself, that prevented her from ever attaching suspicion to others. But a sort of vague, undefined apprehension floated through her brain as she revolved the extraordinary behaviour of her cousin. Yet it was that sort of feeling to which she could not give either a local habitation or a name; and she continued for some time in that most bewildering state of trying, yet not daring to think. Some time elapsed, and Mary's confusion of ideas was increasing rather than diminishing, when Lady Emily slowly entered the room,

and stood some moments before her without speaking.

At length, making an effort, she abruptly said—" Pray, Mary, tell me what you think of me ?"

Mary looked at her with surprise. " I think of you, my dear cousin, as I have always done."

" That is no answer to my question. What do you think of my behaviour just now ?"

" I think," said Mary, gently, " that you have misunderstood me ; that, open and candid yourself, almost to a fault, you readily resent the remotest appearance of duplicity in others. But you are too generous not to do me justice—"

" Ah, Mary ! how little do I appear in my own eyes at this moment ; and how little, with all my boasting, have I known my own heart ! No ! It was not because I am open and candid that I resented your engage-

ment with Colonel Lennox; it was because I was—because—cannot you guess?"

Mary's colour rose, as she cast down her eyes, and exclaimed with agitation, "No—no, indeed!"

Lady Emily threw her arms around her:—"Dear Mary, you are perhaps the only person upon earth I would make such a confession to—it was because I, who had plighted my faith to another—I, who piqued myself upon my openness and fidelity—I—how it chokes me to utter it! I was beginning to love him myself!—only beginning, observe, for it is already over—I needed but to be aware of my danger to overcome it. Colonel Lennox is now no more to me than your lover, and Edward is again all that he ever was to me; but I—what am I—faithless and self-deceived!" and a few tears dropped from her eyes.

Mary, too much affected to speak, could only press her in silence to her heart.

"These are tears of shame, of penitence, though I must own they look very like those of regret and mortification. What a mercy it is that 'the chemist's magic art' *cannot* 'crystalize these sacred treasures,'" said she with a smile, as she shook a tear drop from her hand; "they are gems I am really not at all fond of appearing in."

"And yet you never appeared to greater advantage," said Mary, as she regarded her with admiration.

"Ah! so you say; but there is, perhaps, a little womanish feeling lurking there. And now you doubtless expect—no, *you* don't, but another would—that I should begin a sentimental description of the rise and progress of this ill-fated attachment, as I suppose it would be styled in the language of romance; but, in truth, I can tell you nothing at all about it."

"Perhaps Colonel Lennox"—said Mary, blushing, and hesitating to name her suspicion.

"No, no—Colonel Lennox was not to blame: There was no false play on either side; he is as much above the meanness of coquetry, as—I must say it—as I am. His thoughts were all along taken up with you, even while he talked, and laughed, and quarrelled with me. While I, so strong in the belief that worlds could not shake my allegiance to Edward, could have challenged all mankind to win my love; and this wicked, wayward, faithless heart, kept silent till you spoke, and then it uttered such a fearful sound! And yet I don't think it was love neither—'l'on n'aime bien qu'une seule fois; c'est la première;'—it was rather a sort of an idle, childish, engrossing sentiment, that *might* have grown to something stronger; but 'tis past now. I have shown you all the weakness of my heart—despise me if you will."

"Dearest Lady Emily, had I the same skill to shew the sentiments of mine, you

would there see what I cannot express—how I admire this noble candour, this generous self-abasement——"

"O, as to meanly hiding my faults, that is what I scorn to do. I may be ignorant of them myself, and in ignorance I may cherish them; but, once convinced of them, I give them to the winds, and all who choose may pick them up. Violent and unjust, and self-deceived, I have been, and may be again; but deceitful I never was, and never will be."

"My dear cousin, what might you not be if you chose!"

"Ah! I know what you mean, and I begin to think you are in the right; by and bye, I believe, I shall come to be of your way of thinking, (if ever I have a daughter she certainly shall,) but not just at present, the reformation would be too sudden. All that I can promise for at present, is, that 'henceforth I will chide no breather in the world but myself,' against whom I know

most faults; and now, from this day, from this moment, I vow——"

"No, I shall do it for you," said Mary, with a smile, as she threw her arms around her neck; henceforth

"The golden laws of love shall be
Upon this pillar hung;
A simple heart, a single eye,
A true and constant tongue.

Let no man for more love pretend
Than he has hearts in store;
True love begun shall never end:
Love one, and love no more."*

But much as Mary loved and admired her cousin, she could not be blind to the defects of her character, and she feared they might yet be productive of great unhappiness to herself. Her mind was open to the reception of every image that brought pleasure along with it; while, in the same spirit, she turned from every thing that

* Marquis of Montrose.

wore an air of seriousness or self-restraint; and even the best affections of a naturally good heart were borne away by the ardour of her feelings, and the impetuosity of her temper. Mary grieved to see the graces of a noble mind thus running wild for want of early culture; and she sought, by every means, save those of lecture and admonition, to lead her to more fixed habits of reflection and self-examination..

But it required all her strength of mind to turn her thoughts, at this time, from herself to another. She, the betrothed of one who was now in the midst of danger, of whose existence she was even uncertain, but on whose fate she felt her own suspended.

"Oh!" thought she, with bitterness of heart, "how dangerous it is to yield too much even to our best affections. I, with so many objects to share in mine, have yet pledged my happiness on a being perishable as myself!" And her soul sickened at

the ills her fancy drew. But she strove to repress this strength of attachment, which she felt would otherwise become too powerful for her reason to controul; and if she did not entirely succeed, at least the efforts she made, and the continual exercise of mind, enabled her, in some degree, to counteract the baleful effects of morbid anxiety, and overweening attachment. At length her apprehensions were relieved for a time, by a letter from Colonel Lennox. An engagement with the enemy had taken place, but he had escaped unhurt: He repeated his vows of unalterable affection; and Mary felt that she was justified in receiving them. She had made Lady Juliana and Mrs. Douglas both acquainted with her situation: the former had taken no notice of the communication, but the latter had expressed her approval, in all the warmth and tenderness of gratified affection.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Preach as I please, I doubt our curious men,
Will choose a pheasant still before a hen."

HORACE.

AMONGST the various occupations to which Mary devoted herself, there was none which merits to be recorded as a greater act of immolation, than her unremitting attentions to aunt Grizzy. It was not merely the sacrifice of time and talents that was required for carrying on this intercourse; these, it is to be hoped, even the most selfish can occasionally sacrifice to the *bien-*

seances of society ; but it was, as it were, a total surrender of her whole being. To a mind of any reflection, no situation can ever be very irksome, in which we can enjoy the privileges of sitting still and keeping silent—but as the companion of Miss Grizzy, quiet and reflection were alike unattainable. When not engaged in *radotage* with Sir Sampson, her life was spent in losing her scissars, mislaying her spectacles, wondering what had become of her thimble, and speculating on the disappearance of a needle—all of which losses daily and hourly recurring, subjected Mary to an unceasing annoyance, for she could not be five minutes in her aunt's company without being at least as many times disturbed, with —"Mary, my dear, will you get up—I think my spectacles must be about you"—or, "Mary, my dear, your eyes are younger than mine, will you look if you can see my needle on the carpet"—or, "Are you

sure, Mary, that's not my thimble you have got? it's very like it; and I'm sure I can't conceive what's become of mine, if that's not it," &c. &c. &c. But her idleness was, if possible, still more irritating than her industry. When she betook herself to the window, it was one incessant cry of "Who's coach is that, Mary, with the green and orange liveries? Come and look at this lady and gentleman, Mary; I'm sure I wonder who they are! Here's something, I declare I'm sure I don't know what you call it —come here, Mary, and see what it is"— and so on *ad infinitum.* Walking was still worse. Grizzy not only stood to examine every article in the shop windows, but actually turned round to observe every striking figure that passed. In short, Mary could not conceal from herself, that weak vulgar relations are an evil to those whose taste and ideas are refined by superior intercourse. But even this discovery she did not deem sufficient to authorise her casting

off or neglecting poor Miss Grizzy, and she in no degree relaxed in her patient attentions towards her.

Even the affection of her aunt, which she possessed in the highest possible degree, far from being an alleviation, was only an additional torment. Every meeting began with, " My dear Mary, how did you sleep last night? Did you make a good breakfast this morning? I declare I think you look a little pale. I'm sure I wish to goodness you mayn't have got cold —colds are going very much about just now—one of the maids in this house has a very bad cold—I hope you will remember to bathe your feet, and take some water gruel to night, and do every thing that Dr. Redgill desires you, honest man!" If Mary absented herself for a day, her salutation was, " My dear Mary, what became of you yesterday? I assure you I was quite miserable about you all day, thinking, which was quite natural, that

something was the matter with you; and I declare I never closed my eyes all night, for thinking about you. I assure you, if it had not been that I couldn't leave Sir Sampson, I would have taken a hackney coach, although I know what impositions they are, and have gone to Beech Park to see what had come over you."

Yet all this Mary bore with the patience of a martyr, to the admiration of Lady Maclaughlan, and the amazement of Lady Emily, who declared she could only submit to be bored as long as she was amused.

On going to Milsom-street one morning, Mary found her aunt in high delight at two invitations she had just received for herself and her niece.

"The one," said she, "is to dinner at Mrs. Pullens. You can't remember her mother, Mrs. Macfuss, I daresay, Mary—she was a most excellent woman, I assure you, and got all her daughters married. And I

remember Mrs. Pullens when she was Flora Macfuss; she was always thought very like her mother; and Mr. Pullens is a most worthy man, and very rich; and it was thought at the time a great marriage for Flora Macfuss, for she had no money of her own, but her mother was a very clever woman, and a most excellent manager; and I daresay so is Mrs. Pullens, for the Macfusses are all famous for their management —so it will be a great thing for you, you know, Mary, to be acquainted with Mrs. Pullens."

Mary was obliged to break in upon the eulogium on Mrs. Pullens, by noticing the other card—This was a subject for still greater gratulation.

"This" said she, "is from Mrs. Bluemits, and it is for the same day with Mrs. Pullens, only it is to tea, not to dinner— To be sure it will be a great pity to leave Mrs. Pullens so soon; but then it would be a great pity not to go to Mrs. Blue-

mits'; for I've never seen her, and her aunt, Miss Shaw, would think it very odd if I was to go back to the Highlands without seeing Nancy Shaw, now Mrs. Bluemits; and, at any rate, I assure you we may think much of being asked, for she is a very clever woman, and makes it a point never to ask any but clever people to her house; so it's a very great honour to be asked."

It was an honour Mary would fain have dispensed with. At another time she might have anticipated some amusement from such parties, but at present her heart was not tuned to the ridiculous, and she attempted to decline the invitations, and get her aunt to do the same; but she gave up the point when she saw how deeply Grizzy's happiness, for the time being, was involved in these invitations, and she even consented to accompany her, conscious, as Lady Maclaughlan said, that the poor creature required a leading string, and was not fit

to go alone. The appointed day arrived, and Mary found herself in company with aunt Grizzy, at the mansion of Mr. Pullens, the fortunate husband of the *ci-devant* Miss Flora Macfuss; but as Grizzy is not the best of biographers, we must take the liberty of introducing this lady to the acquaintance of our reader.

The domestic economy of Mrs. Pullens was her own theme, and the theme of all her friends; and such was the zeal in promulgating her doctrines, and her anxiety to see them carried into effect, that she had endeavoured to pass it into a law, that no preserves could be eatable but those preserved in her method; no hams could be good but those cured according to her receipt; no liquors drinkable but such as were made from the results of her experience; neither was it possible that any linens could be white, or any flannels soft, or any muslins clear, unless done up after the manner practised in her laundry. By her own account,

she was the slave of every servant within her door, for her life seemed to be one unceasing labour to get every thing done in her own way, to the very blacking of Mr. Pullen's shoes, and the brushing of Mr. Pullen's coat. But then these heroic acts of duty were more than repaid by the noble consciousness of a life well spent. In her own estimation, she was one of the greatest characters that had ever lived; for, to use her own words, she passed nothing over —she saw every thing done herself—she trusted nothing to servants, &c. &c. &c.

From the contemplation of these her virtues, her face had acquired an expression of complacency foreign to her natural temper; for, after having scolded and slaved in the kitchen, she sat down to taste the fruits of her labours with far more elevated feelings of conscious virtue than ever warmed the breast of a Hampden, or a Howard; and when she helped Mr. Pullens to pie, made, not by the cook, but by herself,

it was with an air of self-approbation that might have vied with that of the celebrated Jack Horner upon a similar occasion. In many cases there might have been merit in Mrs. Pullens' doings—a narrow income, the capricious taste of a sick or a cross husband, may exalt the meanest offices which woman can render into acts of virtue, and even diffuse a dignity around them: but Mr. Pullens was rich and good-natured, and would have been happy had his cook been allowed to dress his dinner, and his barber his wig, quietly in their own way. Mrs. Pullens, therefore, only sought the indulgence of her own low inclinations, in thus interfering in every menial department; while, at the same time, she expected all the gratitude and admiration that would have been due to the sacrifice of the most refined taste and elegant pursuits.

But "envy does merit as its shade pursue," as Mrs. Pullens experienced, for she found herself assailed by a host of house-

keepers, who attempted to throw discredit on her various arts. At the head of this association was Mrs. Jekyll, whose arrangements were on a quite contrary plan. The great branch of science on which Mrs. Pullens mainly relied for fame, was her unrivalled art in keeping things long beyond the date assigned by nature; and one of her master-strokes was, in the middle of summer, to surprise a whole company with gooseberry tarts made of gooseberries of the preceding year; and her triumph was complete, when any of them were so polite as to assert that they might have passed upon them for the fruits of the present season. Another art in which she flattered herself she was unrivalled, was that of making things pass for what they were not; thus, she gave pork for lamb—common fowls for turkey poults—currant wine for champaigne—whisky with peach leaves for noyau; but all these deceptions Mrs. Jekyll piqued herself in immediately detecting, and never

failed to point out the difference; and, in the politest manner, to hint her preference of the real over the spurious. Many were the wonderful morsels with which poor Mr. Pullens was regaled, but he had now ceased to be surprised at any thing that appeared on his own table; and he had so often heard the merit of his wife's housekeeping extolled by herself, that, contrary to his natural conviction, he now began to think it must be true; or if he had occasionally any little private misgivings when he thought of the good dinners he used to have in his bachelor days, he comforted himself by thinking that his lot was the lot of all married men who are blest with active, managing, economical wives. Such were Mr. and Mrs. Pullens; and the appearance of the house offered no inadequate idea of the mistress: The furniture was incongruous, and every thing was ill-matched —for Mrs. Pullens was a frequenter of sales, and, like many other liberal minded ladies,

never allowed a bargain to pass, whether she required the articles or not. Her dress was the same; there was always something to wonder at; caps that had been bought for nothing, because they were a little soiled, but by being taken down and washed, and new trimmed, turned out to be just as good as new—gowns that had been dyed, turned, cleaned, washed, &c.; and the great triumph was when nobody could tell the old breadth from the new.

The dinner was of course bad, the company stupid, and the conversation turned solely upon Mrs. Pullens' exploits, with occasional attempts of Mrs. Jekyll to depreciate the merits of some of her discoveries. At length the hour of departure arrived, to Mary's great relief, as she thought any change must be for the better. Not so Grizzy, who was charmed and confounded by all she had seen, and heard, and tasted, and all of whose preconceived ideas on the subjects of washing, preserving, &c. had

sustained a total *bouleversement*, upon hearing of the superior methods practised by Mrs. Pullens.

"Well, certainly, Mary, you must allow Mrs. Pullens is an astonishing clever woman! Indeed, I think nobody can dispute it —only think of her never using a bit of soap in her house—every thing is washed by steam. To be sure, as Mrs. Jekyll said, the table linen was remarkably ill-coloured—but no wonder, considering—it must be a great saving, I'm sure—and she always stands and sees it done herself, for there's no trusting these things to servants. Once when she trusted it to them, they burned a dozen of Mr. Pullens' new shirts, just from carelessness, which I'm sure was very provoking. To be sure, as Mrs. Jekyll said, if she had used soap like other people, that wouldn't have happened; and then it is wonderful how well she contrives to keep things. I declare I can't think enough of these green peas that we had at dinner to

day, having been kept since summer was a year. To be sure, as Mrs. Jekyll said, they certainly were hard—nobody can deny that—but then, you know, any thing would be hard, that had been kept since summer was a year; and I'm sure I thought they ate wonderfully well considering—and these red currants, too—I'm afraid you didn't taste them—I wish to goodness you had tasted them, Mary. They were sour and dry, certainly, as Mrs. Jekyll said; but no wonder, any thing would be sour and dry that had been kept in bottles for three years."

Grizzy was now obliged to change the current of her ideas, for the carriage had stopped at Mrs. Bluemits'.

CHAPTER XVII.

> "It is certain, great knowledge, if it be without vanity, is the most severe bridle of the tongue. For so have I heard, that all the noises and prating of the pool, the croaking of frogs and toads, is hushed and appeased upon the instant of bringing upon them the light of a candle or torch. Every beam of reason, and ray of knowledge, checks the dissolutions of the tongue."
>
> JEREMY TAYLOR.

THEY were received by Mrs. Bluemits with that air of condescension which great souls practise towards ordinary mortals, and which is intended, at one and the same time, to encourage and to repel; to shew the extent of their goodness, even while they make, or try to make, their *protégé* feel the immeasurable distance which nature or fortune has placed between them.

It was with this air of patronising grandeur that Mrs. Bluemits took her guests

by the hand, and introduced them to the circle of females already assembled.

Mrs. Bluemits was not an avowed authoress; but she was a professed critic, a well informed woman, a woman of great conversational powers, &c. and, to use her own phrase, nothing but conversation was spoke in her house. Her guests were therefore always expected to be distinguished, either for some literary production, or for their taste in the *belles lettres*. Two ladies from Scotland, the land of poetry and romance, were consequently hailed as new stars in Mrs. Bluemits' horizon. No sooner were they seated, than Mrs. Bluemits began:

"As I am a friend to ease in literary society, we shall, without ceremony, resume our conversation; for, as Seneca observes, the 'comfort of life depends upon conversation.'"

"I think," said Miss Graves, "it is Rochefoucault who says, 'the great art of conversation is to hear patiently and answer precisely.'"

"A very poor definition for so profound a philosopher," remarked Mrs. Apsley.

"The amiable author of what the gigantic Johnson styles the melancholy and angry Night Thoughts, gives a nobler, a more elevated, and, in my humble opinion, a juster explication of the intercourse of mind," said Miss Parkins: and she repeated the following lines with pompous enthusiasm:

> "Speech ventilates our intellectual fire,
> Speech burnishes our mental magazine,
> Brightens for ornament, and whets for use.
> What numbers, sheath'd in erudition, lie,
> Plung'd to the hilts in venerable tomes,
> And rusted in, who might have borne an edge,
> And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to speech—
> If born blest heirs of half their mother's tongue!"

Mrs. Bluemits proceeded:

> "'Tis thought's exchange, which, like the alternate push
> Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum,
> And defecates the student's standing pool."

"The sensitive poet of Olney, if I mistake not," said Mrs. Dalton, "steers a middle course, betwixt the somewhat bald maxim of the Parisian philosopher, and the mourn-

ful pruriency of the Bard of Night, when he says,

> " Conversation, in its better part,
> May be esteem'd a gift, and not an art."

Mary had been accustomed to read, and to reflect upon what she read, and to apply it to the purpose for which it is valuable, viz. in enlarging her mind and cultivating her taste; but she had never been accustomed to prate, or quote, or sit down for the express purpose of displaying her acquirements; and she began to tremble at hearing authors' names ' familiar in their mouths as household words ;' but Grizzy strong in ignorance, was nowise daunted. True, she heard what she could not comprehend, but she thought she would soon make things clear; and she therefore turned to her neighbour on her right hand, and accosted her with—" My niece and I are just come from dining at Mrs. Pullens' —I dare say you have heard of her—she was Miss Flora M'Fuss; her father, Dr.

M'Fuss, was a most excellent preacher, and she is a remarkable clever woman."

"Pray, Ma'am, has she come out, or is she simply *bel esprit?*" inquired the lady.

Grizzy was rather at a loss; and, indeed, to answer a question put in an unknown language, would puzzle wiser brains than her's; but Grizzy was accustomed to converse, without being able to comprehend, and she therefore went on.

"Her mother, Mrs. M'Fuss—but she is dead—was a very clever woman too; I'm sure, I declare, I don't know whether the Doctor or her was the cleverest; but many people, I know, think Mrs. Pullens beats them both."

"Indeed! may I ask in what department she chiefly excels?"

"O, I really think in every thing. For one thing, every thing in her house is done by steam; and then she can keep every thing, I can't tell how long, just in paper bags and bottles; and she is going to pub-

lish a book with all her receipts in it. I'm sure it will be very interesting."

"I beg ten thousand pardons for the interruption," cried Mrs. Bluemits, from the opposite side of the room; "but my ear was smote with the sounds of *publish*, and *interesting*—words which never fail to awaken a responsive chord in my bosom. Pray," addressing Grizzy, and bringing her into the full blaze of observation, "may I ask, was it of *the* Campbell these electric words were spoken? To you, Madam, I am sure I need not apologize for my enthusiasm—You who claim the proud distinction of being a countrywoman, need I ask—an acquaintance?"

All that poor Grizzy could comprehend of this harangue, was, that it was reckoned a great honour to be acquainted with a Campbell; and chuckling with delight at the idea of her own consequence, she briskly replied—

"O, I know plenty of Campbells; there's the Campbells of Mireside, relations of ours;

and there's the Campbells of Blackbrae, married into our family; and there's the Campbells of Windlestrae Glen, are not very distant by my mother's side."

Mary felt as if perforated by bullets in all directions, as she encountered the eyes of the company, turned alternately upon her aunt and her; but they were on opposite sides of the room; therefore to interpose betwixt Grizzy and her assailants was impossible.

"Possibly," suggested Mrs. Dalton, "Miss Douglas prefers the loftier strains of the mighty Minstrel of the Mountains, to the more polished periods of the Poet of the Transatlantic Plain."

"Or perhaps," said Miss Crick, "Miss Douglas prefers nature in its simplest, homeliest form; pray Ma'am," turning full upon the now bewildered Grizzy, "are you an admirer of Crabbe's Tales?" "Crabs' tails!" repeated Grizzy in astonishment, "I don't think ever I tasted them—Indeed I don't think our Crabs have tails;

but I'm very fond of crab's claws when there's any thing in them." Fortunately, the confusion of tongues was at this moment so great, that Grizzy's *lapsus* passed unnoticed by all but Mary, whose ears tingled at every word she uttered.

"Without either a possibility or a perhaps," said Mrs. Apsley, "the probability is, Miss Douglas prefers the author of The Giaour to all the rest of her poetical countrymen. Where, in either Walter Scott or Thomas Campbell, will you find such lines as these?

'Wet with their own best blood, shall drip
Thy gnashing tooth and haggard lip!'"

"Pardon me, Madam," said Miss Parkin; "but I am of opinion you have scarcely given a fair specimen of the powers of the Noble Bard in question. The image here presented is a familiar one; 'the gnashing tooth,' and 'haggard lip,' we have all witnessed, perhaps some of us may even have experienced. There is consequently little merit in presenting it to the mind's

eye: It is easy, comparatively speaking, to pourtray the feelings and passions of our own kind. We have only, as Dryden expresses it, to descend into ourselves, to find the secret imperfections of our mind. It is therefore in his portraiture of the canine race, that the illustrious author has so far excelled all his contemporaries: in fact, he has given quite a dramatic cast to his dogs:" and she repeated with an air of triumph—

> "And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall,
> Hold o'er the dead their carnival;
> Gorging and growling o'er carcase and limb,
> They were too busy to bark at him!
> From a Tartar's skull they had stripped the flesh,
> As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh;
> And their white tusks crunched o'er the whiter skull,
> As it slipped through their jaws when their edge grew dull;
> As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,
> When they scarce could rise from the spot where they fed."

"Now, to enter into the conceptions of a dog—to embody one's self, as it were, in the person of a brute—to sympathise in its feelings—to make its propensities our own —to 'lazily mumble the bones of the dead,' with our own individual 'white tusks!' Par-

don me, Madam, but with all due deference to the genius of a Scott, it is a thing he has not dared to attempt. Only the finest mind in the universe was capable of taking so bold a flight. Scott's dogs, Madam, are tame, domestic animals—mere human dogs, if I may say so. Byron's dogs——But let them speak for themselves!

'The scalps were in the wild dog's maw,
The hair was tangled round his jaw.'

Shew me, if you can, such an image in Scott?"

"Very fine, certainly!" was here uttered by five novices, who were only there as probationers, consequently not privileged to go beyond a response.

"Is it the dancing dogs they are speaking about?" asked Grizzy. But looks of silent contempt were the only replies she received.

"I trust I shall not be esteemed presumptuous," said Miss Entick, "or supposed capable of entertaining views of detracting from the merits of the Noble Author at

present under discussion, if I humbly, but firmly, enter my caveat against the word 'crunch,' as constituting an innovation in our language, the purity of which cannot be too strictly preserved, or pointedly enforced. I am aware that by some I may be deemed unnecessarily fastidious; and possibly Christina, Queen of Sweden, might have applied to me the celebrated observation, said to have been elicited from her by the famed work of the laborious French Lexicographer, viz. that he was the most troublesome person in the world, for he required of every word to produce its passport, and to declare whence it came, and whither it was going. I confess, I too, for the sake of my country, would wish that every word we utter might be compelled to shew its passport, attested by our great lawgiver, Dr. Samuel Johnson."

"Unquestionably," said Mrs. Bluemits, "purity of language ought to be preserved inviolate at any price; and it is more espe-

cially incumbent upon those who exercise a sway over our minds—those who are, as it were, the moulds in which our young imaginations are formed, to be the watchful guardians of our language. But I lament to say, that in fact it is not so; and that the aberrations of our vernacular tongue have proceeded solely from the licentious use made of it by those whom we are taught to reverence as the fathers of the Sock and Lyre."

"Yet in familiar colloquy, I do not greatly object to the use of a word occasionally, even although unsanctioned by the authority of our mighty Lexicographer," said a new speaker.

"For my part," said Miss Parkins, "a genius fettered by rules, always reminds me of Gulliver in the hairy bonds of the Lilliputians; and the sentiment of the elegant and enlightened bard of Twickenham, is also mine:

'Great wits somtimes may gloriously offend,
And rise to faults true critics dare not mend;
From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art.'

So it is with the subject of our argument: a tamer genius than the illustrious Byron would not have dared to 'crunch' the bone. But where, in the whole compass of the English language, will you find a word capable of conveying the same idea?"

"Pick," modestly suggested one of the novices in a low key, hoping to gain some celebrity by this her first effort; but this dawn of intellect passed unnoticed.

The argument was now beginning to run high; parties were evidently forming of crunchers and anti-crunchers, and etymology was beginning to be called for, when a thundering knock at the door caused a cessation of hostilities.

"That, I flatter myself, is my friend Miss Griffon," said Mrs. Bluemits, with an air of additional importance; and the name

was whispered round the circle, coupled with " Celebrated Authoress—Fevers of the Heart—Thoughts of the Moment," &c. &c.

" Is she a *real* authoress that is coming?" asked Miss Grizzy at the lady next her. And her delight was great at receiving an answer in the affirmative; for Grizzy thought to be in company with an authoress was the next thing to being an authoress herself; and, like some other people, she had a sort of vague mysterious reverence for every one whose words had been printed in a book.

" Ten thousand thousand pardons, dearest Mrs. Bluemits!" exclaimed Miss Griffon, as she entered. " I fear a world of intellect is lost to me by this cruel delay." Then in an audible whisper—" But I was detained by my publisher: He quite persecutes me to write. My ' Fevers of the Heart' has had a prodigious run; and even my ' Thoughts,' which, in fact, cost me no

thought, are amazingly *recherché*. And I actually had to force my way to you to-night through a legion of printer's devils, who were lying in wait for me with each a sheet of my 'Billows of Love.'"

"The title is most musical, most melancholy," said Mrs. Bluemits, "and conveys a perfect idea of what Dryden terms 'the sweeping deluge of the soul;' but I flatter myself we shall have something more than a name from Miss Griffon's genius. The Aonian Graces, 'tis well known, always follow in her train."

"They have made a great hole in it then," said Grizzy, officiously displaying a fracture in the train of Miss Griffon's gown, and from thence taking occasion to deliver her sentiments on the propriety of people who tore gowns always being obliged to mend them.

After suitable entreaties had been used, Miss Griffon was at last prevailed upon to favour the company with some specimens

of the "Billows of Love," (of which we were unable to procure copies,) and the following sonnet, the production of a friend:

"Hast thou no note for joy, thou weeping lyre?
Doth yew and willow ever shade thy string,
And melancholy sable banners fling,
Warring 'midst hosts of elegant desire?
How vain the strife—how vain the warlike gloom!
Love's arms are grief—his arrows sighs and tears;
And every moan thou mak'st, an altar rears,
To which his worshippers devoutly come.
Then rather, lyre, I pray thee, try thy skill,
In varied measure, on a sprightlier key:
Perchance thy gayer tones' light minstrelsy,
May heal the poison that thy plaints distil.
But much I fear that joy is danger still;
And joy, like woe, love's triumph must fulfil."

This called forth unanimous applause—"delicate imagery"—"smooth versification"—"classical ideas"—"Petrarchian sweetness," &c. &c. resounded from all quarters.

But even intellectual joys have their termination, and carriages and servants began to be announced in rapid succession.

"Fly not yet, 'tis just the hour," said Mrs. Bluemits to the first of her departing guests, as the clock struck ten.

"It is gone, with its thorns and its roses," replied her friend with a sigh, and a farewell pressure of the hand.

Another now advanced—"Wilt thou be gone?—it is not yet near day."

"I have less will to go than care to stay," was the reply.

"*Parto ti lascio adio*," warbled Miss Parkins.

"I vanish," said Mrs. Apsley, snatching up her tippet, ridicule, &c. "and, like the baseless fabric of a vision, leave not a wreck behind."

"Fare-thee-well at once—Adieu, adieu, adieu, remember me!" cried the last of the band, as she slowly retreated.

Mrs. Bluemits waved her hand with a look of tender reproach, as she repeated—

> "An adieu should in utterance die,
> Or, if written should faintly appear—
> Should be heard in the sob of a sigh,
> Or be seen in the blot of a tear."

"I'm sure, Mary," said Grizzy, when they were in the carriage, "I expected,

when all the ladies were repeating, that you would have repeated something too. You used to have the Hermit and all Watts' Hymns by heart, when you was little. It's a thousand pities, that you should have forgot them; for I declare, I was quite affronted to see you sitting like a stick, and not saying a word, when all the ladies were speaking, and turning up their eyes, and moving their hands so prettily; but I hope next time you go to Mrs. Bluemits, you will take care to learn something by heart before you go. I'm sure I hav'nt a very good memory, but I remember some things; and I was very near going to repeat, 'Farewell to Lochaber' myself, as we were coming away; and I wish to goodness I had done it; but I suppose it wouldn't do to go back now; and, at any rate, all the ladies are away, and I daresay the candles will be out by this time."

Mary felt it a relief to have done with this surfeit of soul, and was of opinion, that

learning, like religion, ought never to be forced into conversation; and that people, who only read to talk of their reading, might as well let it alone.—Next morning she gave so ludicrous an account of her entertainment, that Lady Emily was quite charmed.

"Now I begin to have hopes of you," said she, "since I see you can laugh at your friends as well as me."

"Not at my friends, I hope," answered Mary; "only at folly."

"Call it what you will: I only wish I had been there. I should certainly have started a controversy upon the respective merits of Tom Thumb and Puss in Boots, and so have called them off Lord Byron. Their pretending to measure the genius of a Scott or a Byron, must have been something like a fly attempting to take the altitude of Mount Blanc. How I detest those 'idle disquisitions about the colour of a goat's beard, or the blood of an oyster!'"

Mary had seen, in Mrs. Douglas, the effects of a highly cultivated understanding shedding its mild radiance on the path of domestic life, heightening its charms, and softening its asperities, with the benign spirit of Christianity. Her charity was not like that of Mrs. Fox; she did not indulge herself in the purchase of elegant ornaments, and then, seated in the easy chair of her drawing-room, extort from her visitors money to satisfy the wants of those who had claims on her own bounty. No: she gave a large portion of her time, her thoughts, her fortune, to the most sacred of all duties—charity, in its most comprehensive meaning. Neither did her knowledge, like that of Mrs. Bluemits, evaporate in pedantic discussion or idle declamation, but shewed itself in the tenor of a well spent life, and in the graceful discharge of those duties which belonged to her sex and station. Next to goodness, Mary most ardently admired talents. She knew there

were many of her own sex who were justly entitled to the distinction of literary fame. Her introduction to the circle at Mrs. Bluemits' had disappointed her; but they were mere pretenders to the name. How different from those described by one no less amiable and enlightened herself!—"Let such women as are disposed to be vain of their comparatively petty attainments, look up with admiration to those contemporary shining examples, the venerable Elizabeth Carter, and the blooming Elizabeth Smith. In them let our young ladies contemplate profound and various learning, chastised by true Christian humility. In them let them venerate acquirements, which would have been distinguished in an university, meekly softened, and beautifully shaded by the exertion of every domestic virtue, the unaffected exercise of every feminine employment." *

* Cœlebs.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"The gods, to curse Pamela with her pray'rs,
Gave the gilt coach and dappled Flanders' mares;
The shining robes, rich jewels, beds of state,
And, to complete her bliss, a fool for mate.
She glares in balls, front boxes, and the ring—
A vain, unquiet, glitt'ring wretched thing!
Pride, pomp, and state, but reach her outward part;
She sighs, and is no duchess at her heart."

POPE.

For many months, Mary was doomed to experience all the vicissitudes of hope and fear, as she heard of battles and sieges, in which her lover had a part. He omitted no opportunity of writing to her; but scarcely had she received the assurance of

his safety from himself, when her apprehensions were again excited by rumours of fresh dangers he would have to encounter; and it required all her pious confidence and strength of mind to save her from yielding to the despondency of a naturally sensitive heart. But in administering to the happiness of others, she found the surest alleviation to the misfortune that threatened herself; and she often forgot her own cares in her benevolent exertions for the poor, the sick, and the desolate. It was then she felt all the tenderness of that divine precept, which enjoins love of the Creator as the engrossing principle of the soul. For, oh! the unutterable anguish that heart must endure, which lavishes all its best affections on a creature mutable and perishable as itself, from whom a thousand accidents may separate or estrange it, and from whom death must one day divide it! Yet there is something so amiable, so exalting, in the fervour of a pure

and generous attachment, that few have been able to resist its overwhelming influence; and it is only time and suffering that can teach us to comprehend the miseries that wait on the excess, even of our virtuous inclinations, where these virtues aspire not beyond this transitory scene.

Mary seldom heard from her mother or sister. Their time was too precious to be wasted on dull country correspondents; but she saw their names frequently mentioned in the newspapers, and she flattered herself, from the *eclat* with which the Duchess seemed to be attended, that she had found happiness in those pleasures where she had been taught to expect it. The Duchess was, indeed, surrounded with all that rank, wealth, and fashion could bestow. She had the finest house, jewels, and equipages in London, but she was not happy. She felt the draught bitter, even though the goblet that held it was of gold. It is novelty only that can lend charms to

things in themselves valueless; and when that wears off, the disenchanted baubles appear in all their native worthlessness. There is even a satiety in the free indulgence of wealth, when that indulgence centers solely in self, and brings no generous self-approving reflections along with it. So it was with the Duchess of Altamont. She sought, in the gratification of every expensive whim, to stimulate the languid sense of joy; and, by loading herself with jewels, she strove to still the restless inquietude of a dissatisfied heart. But it is only the vulgar mind which can long find enjoyment in the mere attributes of wealth —in the contemplation of silk hangings, and gilded chairs, and splendid dresses, and shewy equipages. Amidst all these, the mind of any taste or refinement, "distrusting, asks if this be joy." And Adelaide possessed both taste and refinement, though her ideas had been perverted, and her heart corrupted, by the false maxims early in-

stilled into her. Yet, selfish and unfeeling as she was, she sickened at the eternal recurrence of self-indulged caprices; and the bauble that had been hailed with delight the one day as a charmed amulet to dispel her *ennui*, was the next beheld with disgust or indifference. She believed, indeed, that she had real sources of vexation in the self-will and obstinacy of her husband, and that, had he been otherwise than he was, she should then have been completely happy. She would not acknowledge, even to herself, that she had done wrong in marrying a man whose person was disagreeable to her, and whose understanding she despised, while her preference was decidedly in favour of another. Even her style of life was, in some respects, distasteful to her; yet she was obliged to conform to it. The Duke retained exactly the same notions of things as had taken possession of his brain thirty yearsbefore; consequently,everything in his establishment was conducted with a

regularity and uniformity unknown to those whose habits are formed on the more eccentric models of the present day; or rather, who have no models, save those of their own capricious tastes and inclinations. He had an antipathy to balls, concerts, and masquerades; for he did not dance, knew nothing of music, and still less of *badinage*. But he liked great dull dinners, for there the conversation was generally adapted to his capacity; and it was a pleasure to him to arrange the party—to look over the bill of fare—to see all the family plate displayed—and to read an account of the grand dinner at the Duke of Altamont's, in the Morning Post of the following day. All this sounds very vulgar for the pastimes of a Duke; but there are vulgar-minded Dukes, as there are gifted ploughmen, or any other anomalies. The former Duchess, a woman of high birth, similar years, and kindred spirit of his own in all matters of form and *etiquette*, was his

standard of female propriety ; and she would have deemed it highly derogatory to her dignity to have patronised any other species of entertainment than grand dinners and dull assemblies.

Adelaide had attempted, with a high hand, at once to overturn the whole system of Altamont House, and had failed. She had declared her detestation of dinners, and been heard in silence. She had kept her room thrice when they were given, but without success. She had insisted upon giving a ball, but the Duke, with the most perfect composure, had peremptorily declared it must be an assembly. Thus baffled in all her plans of domestic happiness, the Duchess would have sought her pleasures elsewhere. She would have lived any where but in her own house—associated with every body but her own husband—and done every thing but what she had vowed to do. But even in this she was thwarted. The Duke had the same pre-

cise formal notions of a lady's conduct abroad, as well as her appearance at home; and the very places she would have most wished to go to, were those she was expressly prohibited from ever appearing at.

Even all that she could have easily settled to her own satisfaction, by the simple apparatus of a separate establishment, carried on in the same house; but here, too, she was foiled, for his Grace had stubborn notions on that score also, and plainly hinted, that any separation must be final, and decided; and Adelaide could not yet resolve upon taking so formidable a step in the first year of her marriage. She was, therefore, compelled to drag the chain by which with her own will, she had bound herself for life to one she already despised and detested. And bound she was, in the strictest sense of the metaphor; for, though the Duke had not the smallest pleasure in the society of his wife, he yet attached great ideas of propriety to their being always

seen together, side by side. Like his sister, Lady Matilda, he had a high reverence for appearances, though he had not her *finesse* in giving them effect. He had merely been accustomed to do what he thought looked well, and gave him an air of additional dignity: He had married Adelaide, because he thought she had a fine presence, and would look well as Duchess of Altamont; and, for the same reason, now that she was his wedded wife, he thought it looked well to be seen always together. He therefore, made a point of having no separate engagements; and even carried his sense of propriety so far, that as regularly as the Duchess' carriage came to the door, the Duke was prepared to hand her in, in due form, and take his station by her side. This alone would have been sufficient to have embittered Adelaide's existence, and she had tried every expedient, but in vain, to rid herself of this public display of conjugal duty: She had opened her landaulet in

cold weather, and shut it, even to the glasses, in a scorching sun; but the Duke was insensible to heat and cold: He was most provokingly healthy; and she had not even the respite which an attack of rheumatism, or tooth-ache, would have afforded. As his Grace was not a person of keen sensation, this continual effort to keep up appearances cost him little or nothing; but to the Duchess' nicer tact, it was martyrdom to be compelled to submit to the semblance of affection, where there was no reality. Ah, nothing but a sense of duty, early instilled, and practically enforced, can reconcile a refined mind to the painful task of bearing, with meekness and gentleness, the ill temper, adverse will, and opposite sentiments, of those with whom we can acknowledge no feeling in common!

But Adelaide possessed no sense of duty, and was a stranger to self-command; and, though she boasted refinement of mind, yet it was of that spurious sort, which, far

from elevating and purifying the heart, tends only to corrupt and debase the soul, while it sheds a false and dazzling lustre upon those perishable graces which captivate the senses.

It may easily be imagined, the good sense of the mother did not tend to soothe the irritated feelings of the daughter. Lady Juliana was, indeed, quite as much exasperated as the Duchess, at these obstacles thrown in the way of her pleasures, and the more so as she could not quite clearly comprehend them. The good nature of her husband, and the easy indolence of her brother, even *her* folly had enabled her, on many occasions, to get the better of; but the obstinacy of her son-in-law was invincible to all her arts—she could, therefore, only wonder to the Duchess, how she could not manage to get the better of the Duke's prejudices against balls, and concerts, and masquerades: It was so excessively ridiculous, so perfectly foolish, not to do as other

people did; and there was the Duchess of Ryston gave Sunday concerts, and Lady Oakham saw masks, and even old ugly Lady Loddon had a ball, and the Prince at it! How vastly provoking! how unreasonable in a man of the Duke's years, to expect a girl like Adelaide to conform to all his old fashioned notions! And then she would wisely appeal to Lord Lindore, whether it was not too absurd in the Duke to interfere with the Duchess' arrangements.

Lord Lindore was a frequent visitor at Altamont House; for the Duke, satisfied with his having been once refused, was nowise jealous of him; and Lord Lindore was too quiet and refined in his attentions to excite the attention of any one so stupid and obtuse. It was not the least of the Duchess' mortifications, to be constantly contrasting her former lover—elegant, captivating, and *spirituel*—with her husband, awkward, insipid, and dull, as the "fat weed that rots on Lethe's shore." Lord

Lindore was, indeed, the most admired man in London, celebrated for his conquests, his horses, his elegance, manner, dress; in short, in every thing he gave the tone. But he had too much taste to carry any thing to extreme; and, in the midst of incense, and adulation, and imitation, he still retained that simple, unostentatious elegance, that marks the man of real fashion—the man who feels his own consequence, independent of all extraneous modes, or fleeting fashions.

There is, perhaps, nothing so imposing, nothing that carries a greater sway over a mind of any refinement, than simplicity, when we feel assured that it springs from a genuine contempt of shew and ostentation. Lord Lindore was aware of this, and he did not attempt to vie with the Duke of Altamont, in the splendour of his equipage, the richness of his liveries, the number of his attendants, or any of those obvious attractions: on the contrary, every thing be-

longing to him was of the plainest description; and, except in the beauty of his horses, he seemed to scorn every species of extravagance: but then, he rode with so much elegance, he drove his curricle with such graceful ease, as formed a striking contrast to the formal Duke, sitting bolt-upright in his state chariot, *chapeau bras*, and star; and the Duchess often quitted the Park, where Lord Lindore was the admired of all admirers, mortified and ashamed at being seen in the same carriage with the man she had chosen for her husband. Ambition had led her to marry the Duke, and that same passion now heightened her attachment for Lord Lindore; for, as some one has remarked, ambition is not always the desire for that which is in itself excellent, but for that which is most prized by others; and the handsome Lord Lindore was courted and caressed in circles, where the dull, precise Duke of Altamont was wholly overlooked. Months

passed in this manner, and every day added something to Adelaide's feelings of chagrin and disappointment. But it was still worse when she found herself settled for a long season at Norwood Abbey—a dull, magnificent residence, with a vast unvaried park, a profusion of sombre trees, and a sheet of still water, decorated, with leaden deities. Within doors every thing was in the same style of vapid, tasteless grandeur, and the society was not such as to dispel the *ennui* these images served to create. Lady Matilda Sufton, her satellite Mrs. Finch, General Carver, and a few stupid, elderly lords, and their well-bred ladies, comprised the family circle; and the Duchess experienced, with bitterness of spirit, that " rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home," are blessings wealth cannot purchase, nor greatness command; while she sickened at the stupid, the almost *vulgar* magnificence of her lot.

At this period Lord Lindore arrived on a visit, and the daily, hourly, contrast that occurred, betwixt the elegant, impassioned lover, and the dull, phlegmatic husband, could not fail of producing the usual effects on an unprincipled mind. Rousseau and Goëthe were studied, French and German sentiments were exchanged, till criminal passion was exalted into the purest of all earthly emotions. It were tedious to dwell upon the minute, the almost imperceptible occurrences, that tended to heighten the illusion of passion, and throw an air of false dignity around the degrading spells of vice; but so it was, that in something less than a year from the time of her marriage, this victim of self-indulgence again sought her happiness in the gratification of her own headstrong passions, and eloped with Lord Lindore, vainly hoping to find peace and joy amid guilt and infamy.

CHAPTER XIX.

"On n'est guères obligé aux gens qui ne nous viennent voir, que pour nous quereller, qui pendant toute une visite, ne nous disent pas une seule parole obligeante, et qui se font un plaisir malin d'attaquer notre conduite, et de nous faire entrevoir nos défauts."

L'ABBE DE BELLEGARDE.

THE Duke, although not possessed of the most delicate feelings, it may be supposed, was not insensible to his dishonour. He immediately set about taking the legal measures for avenging it; and damages were awarded, which would have the effect of rendering Lord Lindore for ever an alien to his country. Lady Juliana raved, and had hysterics, and seemed to consider herself as the only sufferer by her daughter's misconduct. At one time, Ade-

laide's ingratitude was all her theme: at another, it was Lord Lindore's treachery, and poor Adelaide was every thing that was amiable and injured: then it was the Duke's obstinacy; for, had Adelaide got leave to do as she liked, this never would have happened; had she only got leave to give balls, and to go to masquerades, she would have made the best wife in the world, &c. &c. &c.

All this was warmly resented by Lady Matilda, supported by Mrs. Finch and General Carver, till open hostilities were declared between the ladies, and Lady Juliana was compelled to quit the house she had looked upon as next to her own, and became once more a denizen of Beech Park.

Mary's grief and horror at her sister's misconduct, was proportioned to the nature of the offence. She considered it not as how it might affect herself, or would be viewed by the world, but as a crime committed against the law of God; yet, while

she the more deeply deplored it on that account, no bitter words of condemnation passed her lips. She thought, with humility, of the superior advantages she had enjoyed, in having principles of religion early and deeply engrafted in her soul; and that, but for these, such as her sister's fate was, her's might have been.

She felt for her mother, undeserving as she was of commiseration; and strove, by every means in her power, to promote her comfort and happiness. But that was no easy task: Lady Juliana's notions of comfort and happiness differed as widely from those of her daughter, as reason and folly could possibly do. She was, indeed, "than folly more a fool—a melancholy fool without her bells." She still clung to low earth-born vanities, with as much avidity as though she had never experienced their insecurity: still rung the same changes on the joys of wealth and grandeur, as if she had had actual proof of their unfading

felicity. Then she recurred to the Duke's obstinacy, and Lord Lindore's artifices, till, after having exhausted herself in invective against them, she concluded by comforting herself with the hope that Lord Lindore and Adelaide would marry; and although it would be a prodigious degradation to her, and she could not be received at court, she might yet get into very good society in town: there were many women of high rank exactly in the same situation, who had been driven to elope from their husbands, and who married the men they liked, and made the best wives in the world.

Mary heard all this in shame and silence; but Lady Emily, wearied and provoked by her folly and want of principle, was often led to express her indignation and contempt, in terms which drew tears from her cousin's eyes. Mary was, indeed, the only person in the world who felt her sister's dereliction with the keenest feelings of shame and sorrow. All Adelaide's cold-

ness and unkindness, had not been able to eradicate from her heart those deep-rooted sentiments of affection, which seem to have been entwined with our existence, and which, with some generous natures, end but with their being. Yes! there are ties that bind together those of one family, stronger than those of taste, or choice, or friendship, or reason; for they enable us to love, even in opposition to them all.

It was understood the fugitives had gone to Germany; and after wonder and scandal were exhausted, and a divorce obtained, the Duchess of Altamont, except to her own family, was although she had never been. Such is the transition from grandeur to guilt—from guilt to insignificance!

Amongst the numerous visitors who flocked to Beech Park, whether from sympathy, or curiosity, or exultation, was Mrs. Downe Wright. None of these motives, singly, had brought that Lady there, for her purpose was, that of giving what she genteel-

ly termed some *good hits* to the Douglas' pride: a delicate mode of warfare, in which, it must be owned, the female sex greatly excel.

Mrs. Downe Wright had not forgiven the indignity of her son having been refused by Mary, which she imputed entirely to Lady Emily's influence, and had, from that moment, predicted the downfal of the whole pack, as she styled the family; at the same time always expressing her wish that she might be mistaken, as she wished them well—God knows she bore them no ill will, &c. She entered the drawing-room at Beech Park, with a countenance cast to a totally different expression from that with which she had greeted Lady Matilda Sufton's widowhood. Melancholy would there have been appropriate, here it was insulting; and accordingly, with downcast eyes, and silent pressures of the hand, she saluted every member of the family, and inquired after their healths with

that air of anxious solicitude, which implied, that if they were all well, it was what they ought not to be. Lady Emily's quick tact was presently aware of her design, and she prepared to take the field against her.

"I had some difficulty in getting admittance to you," said Mrs. Downe Wright. "The servant would fain have denied you; but, at such a time, I knew the visit of a friend could not fail of being acceptable, so I made good my way in spite of him."

"I had given orders to be at home to friends only," returned Lady Emily, "as there is no end to the inroads of acquaintances."

"And poor Lady Juliana," said Mrs. Downe Wright, in a tone of affected sympathy, "I hope she is able to see her friends?"

"Did you not meet her?" asked Lady Emily carelessly: "She is just gone to Bath, for the purpose of securing a box during the term of Kean's engagement; she

would not trust to *l'eloquence du billet* upon such an occasion."

"I'm vastly happy to hear she is able for any thing of the kind," in a tone of vehement and overstrained joy, rather unsuitable to the occasion.

A well-feigned look of surprise from Lady Emily made her fear she had overshot her mark; she, therefore, as if from delicacy, changed the conversation to her own affairs. She soon contrived to let it be known, that her son was going to be married to a Scotch Earl's daughter; that she was to reside with them; and that she had merely come to Bath, for the purpose of letting her house—breaking up her establishment—packing up her plate—and, in short, making all those magnificent arrangements which wealthy dowagers usually have to perform on a change of residence. At the end of this triumphant declaration, she added—

"I fain would have the young people live by themselves, and let me just go on

in my own way; but neither my son, nor Lady Grace, would hear of that, although her family are my son's nearest neighbours, and most sensible, agreeable people they are. Indeed, as I said to Lord Glenallan, a man's happiness depends fully as much upon his wife's family as upon herself."

Mary was too noble minded, to suspect that Mrs. Downe Wright could intend to level *inuendos;* but the allusion struck her: she felt herself blush; and, fearful Mrs. Downe Wright would attribute it to a wrong motive, she hastened to join in the eulogium on the Benmavis family in general, and Lady Grace in particular.

"Lady Benmavis is, indeed, a sensible well principled woman, and her daughters have been all well brought up."

Again Mary coloured at the emphasis which marked the sensible, well principled mother, and the well brought up daughters; and, in some confusion, she said something about Lady Grace's beauty.

"She certainly is a very pretty woman," said Mrs. Downe Wright with affected carelessness; "but what is better, she is out of a good nest. For my own part, I place little value upon beauty now; commend me to principles. If a woman is without principles, the less beauty she has the better."

"If a woman has no principles," said Lady Emily, "I don't think it signifies a straw whether she has beauty or not—ugliness can never add to one's virtue."

"I beg your pardon, Lady Emily; a plain woman will never make herself so conspicuous in the world as one of your beauties."

"Then you are of opinion, wickedness lies all in the eye of the world, not in the depths of the heart? Now, I think the person who cherishes—no matter how secretly—pride, envy, hatred, malice, or any other besetting sin, must be quite as criminal in the sight of God, as those who openly indulge their evil propensity."

"I go very much by outward actions," said Mrs. Downe Wright; "they are all we have to judge by."

"But I thought we were forbidden to judge one another?"

"There's no shutting people's mouths, Lady Emily."

"No; all that is required, I believe, is that we should shut our own."

Mary thought the conversation was getting rather too *piquante* to be pleasant, and tried to soften the tone of it, by asking that most innocent question, Whether there was any news?

"Nothing but about battles, and fightings, I suppose," answered Mrs. Downe Wright. "I'm sure they are to be pitied who have friends or relations either in army or navy at present. I have reason to be thankful my son is in neither. He was very much set upon going into one or other; but I was always averse to it; for, independent of the danger, they are

professions that spoil a man for domestic life, they lead to such expensive, dissipated habits, as quite ruin them for family men. I never knew a military man but what must have his bottle of port every day: With sailors, indeed, it's still worse; grog and tobacco soon destroy them. I'm sure, if I had a daughter, it would make me miserable if she was to take a fancy to a naval or military man;—but," as if suddenly recollecting herself, " after all, perhaps its a mere prejudice of mine."

"By no means," said Lady Emily, "there is no prejudice in the matter; what you say is very true. They are to be envied who can contrive to fall in love with a stupid, idle man: *they* never can experience any anxiety: *their* fate is fixed; 'the waveless calm, the slumber of the dead,' is theirs; as long as they can contrive to slumber on, or, at least, to keep their eyes shut, 'tis very well, they are in no danger of stumbling till they come to open them;

and if they are sufficiently stupid themselves, there is no danger of their doing even that. They have only to copy the owl, and they are safe."

"I quite agree with your Ladyship," said Mrs. Downe Wright, with a well *got-up*, good-humoured laugh. "A woman has only not to be a wit or a genius, and there is no fear of her; not that *I* have that antipathy to a clever woman that many people have, and especially the gentlemen. I almost quarrelled with Mr. Headley, the great author, t'other day, for saying that he would rather encounter a nest of wasps than a clever woman."

I should most cordially have agreed with him," said Lady Emily, with equal *naïveté*. "There is nothing more insupportable than one of your clever women, so called. They are generally under-bred, consequently vulgar. They pique themselves upon saying good things *coûte qu'il coûte*. There is something, in short, quite professional about

them; and they wouldn't condescend to chat nonsense as you and I are doing at this moment—oh! not for worlds! Now, I think one of the great charms of life consists in talking nonsense. Good nonsense is an exquisite thing; and 'tis an exquisite thing to be stupid sometimes, and to say nothing at all. Now, these enjoyments the clever women must forego. Clever she is, and clever she must be. Her life must be a greater drudgery than that of any actress. *She* merely frets her hour upon the stage; the curtain dropped, she may become as dull as she chooses; but the clever woman must always stage it even at her own fireside."

"Lady Emily Lindore is certainly the last person from whom I should have expected to hear a panegyric on stupidity," said Mrs. Downe Wright, with some bitterness.

"Stupidity!—oh, heavens! my blood curdles at the thought of real, genuine,

downright stupidity! No! I should always like to have the command of intellect, as well as of money, though my taste, or my indolence, or my whim, perhaps never would incline me to be always sparkling, whether in wit or in diamonds. 'Twas only when I was in the nursery that I envied the good girl who spoke rubies and pearls. Now, it seems to me only just better than not spitting toads and vipers." And she warbled a sprightly French *ariette* to a tame bullfinch that perched upon her hand.

There was an airy, high bred elegance in Lady Emily's impertinence, that seemed to throw Mrs. Downe Wright's coarse sarcasms to an immeasurable distance; and that lady was beginning to despair, but she was determined not to give in while she could possibly stand out. She accordingly rallied her forces, and turned to Mary—

"So you have lost your neighbour, Mrs. Lennox, since I was here? I think she was an acquaintance of your's. Poor wo-

man! her death must have been a happy release to herself and her friends. She has left no family, I believe?" quite aware of the report of Mary's engagement with Colonel Lennox.

"Only one son," said Mary, with a little emotion.

"Oh! very true. He's in the law, I think?"

"In the army," answered Mary faintly.

"That's a poor trade," said Mrs. Downe Wright, "and I doubt he'll not have much to mend it. Rose Hall's but a poor property. I've heard they might have had a good estate in Scotland if it hadn't been for the pride of the General, that wouldn't let him change his name for it. He thought it grander to be a poor Lennox than a rich Macnaughton, or some such name. It's to be hoped the son's of the same mind."

"I have no doubt of it," said Lady Emily: "'Tis a noble name—quite a legacy in itself."

" It's one that, I am afraid, will not be easily turned into bank-notes, however," returned Mrs. Downe Wright, with a *real* hearty laugh. And then, delighted to get off with what she called flying colours, she hastily rose with an exclamation at the lateness of the hour, and a remark how quickly time passed in pleasant company; and, with friendly shakes of the hand, withdrew.

" How very insupportable is such a woman !" said Lady Emily to Mary, " who, to gratify her own malice, says the most cutting things to her neighbours, and, at the same time, feels self-approbation in the belief that she is doing good. And yet, hateful as she is, I blush to say, I have sometimes been amused by her ill-nature, when it was directed against people I hated still more. Lady Matilda Sufton, for example, —there she certainly shone, for hypocrisy is always fair game ; and yet the people who love to hunt it are never amiable. You smile, as much as to say, here is Satan

preaching a sermon on holiness. But, however satirical and intolerant you may think me, you must own that I take no delight in the discovery of other people's faults: if I want the meekness of a Christian, at least, I don't possess the malice of a Jew. Now, Mrs. Downe Wright has a real heartfelt satisfaction in saying malicious things, and in thrusting herself into company, where she must know she is unwelcome, for the sole purpose of saying them. Yet many people are blessed with such blunt perceptions, that they are not at all aware of her real character, and only wonder, when she has left them, what made them feel so uncomfortable when she was present. But she has put me in such a bad humour, that I must go out of doors, and apostrophise the sun, like Lucifer. Do come, Mary, you will help to dispel my chagrin. I really feel as if my heart had been in a lime-kiln, all its kindly feelings are so burnt up by the malignant influen-

ces of Mrs. Downe Wright; while you," continued she, as they strolled into the gardens, "are as cool, and as sweet, and as sorrowful as these violets," gathering some still wet with an April shower. "How delicious, after such a mental *sirocco*, to feel the pure air, and hear the birds sing, and look upon the flowers and blossoms, and sit here, and bask in the sun from laziness to walk into the shade. You must needs acknowledge, Mary, that spring in England is a much more amiable season than in your ungentle clime."

This was the second spring Mary had seen set in, in England. But the first had been wayward and backward as the seasons of her native climate. The present was such a one as poets love to paint. Nature was in all its first freshness and beauty—the ground was covered with flowers—the luxuriant hedge-rows were white with blossoms—the air was impregnated with the odours of the gardens and orchards. Still

Mary sighed as she thought of Lochmarlie: Its wild tangled woods, with here and there a bunch of primroses peeping forth from amidst moss and withered fern—its gurgling rills, blue lakes, rocks, and mountains—all rose to view; and she felt, that, even amid fairer scenes, and beneath brighter suns, her heart would still turn with fond regret to the land of her birth.

CHAPTER XX.

"Wondrous it is, to see in diverse mindes
How diversly Love doth his pageants play,
And shews his power in variable kinds."

SPENSER.

But even the charms of spring were overlooked by Lady Emily, in the superior delight she experienced at hearing that the ship, in which Edward Douglas was, had arrived at Portsmouth; and the intelligence was soon followed by his own arrival at Beech Park. He was received by her with rapture, and by Mary with the tenderest

emotion. Lord Courtland was always glad of an addition to the family party; and even Lady Juliana experienced something like emotion, as she beheld her son, now the exact image of what his father had been twenty years before.

Edward Douglas was, indeed, a perfect model of youthful beauty, and possessed of all the high spirits and happy *insouciance*, which can only charm at that early period. He loved his profession, and had already distinguished himself in it. He was handsome, brave, good-hearted, and good-humoured, but he was not clever; and Mary felt some solicitude as to the permanency of Lady Emily's attachment to him. But Lady Emily, quick-sighted to the defects of the whole world, seemed happily blind to those of her lover; and, when even Mary's spirits were almost exhausted by his noisy rattle, Lady Emily, charmed and exhilarated, entered into all his practical jokes,

and boyish frolics, with the greatest delight.

She soon perceived what was passing in Mary's mind.

" I see perfectly well what you think of my *penchant* for Edward," said she one day; " I can tell you exactly what was passing in your thoughts just now. You were thinking how strange, how passing strange it is, that I, who am (false modesty avaunt!) certainly cleverer than Edward, should yet be so partial to him, and that my lynx eyes should have failed to discover in him faults, which, with a single glance, I should have detected in others. Now, can't you guess what renders even these very faults so attractive to me ?"

" The old story, I suppose ?" said Mary. " Love."

" Not at all. Love might blind me to his faults altogether, and then my case would be, indeed, hopeless, were I living in the belief that I was loving a piece

of perfection—a sort of Apollo Belvidere in mind, as well as in person. Now, so far from that, I could reckon you up a whole catalogue of his faults; and nevertheless, I love him with my whole heart, faults and all. In the first place, they are the faults with which I have been familiar from infancy; and therefore they possess a charm (to my shame be it said!) greater than other people's virtues would have to me. They come over my fancy like some snatch of an old nursery song, which one loves to hear in defiance of taste and reason, merely because it is something that carries us back to those days, which whatever they were in reality, always look bright and sunny in retrospection. In the second place, his faults are real, genuine, natural faults; and, in this age of affectation, how refreshing it is to meet with even a natural fault! I grant you, Edward talks absurdly, and asks questions, *à faire dresser les cheveux*, of a Mrs. Bluemits. But

that amuses me; for his ignorance is not the ignorance of vulgarity or stupidity, but the ignorance of a light head, and a merry heart—of one, in short, whose understanding has been at sea when other people's were at school. His *bon mots* certainly would not do to be printed; but then they make me laugh a great deal more than if they were better, for he is always *naif* and original, and I prefer an indifferent original any day to a good copy. How it shocks me to hear people recommending to their children to copy such a person's manners! A copied manner, how insupportable! The servile imitator of a set pattern, how despicable! No! I would rather have Edward in all the freshness of his own faults, than in the faded semblance of another person's proprieties."

Mary agreed to the truth of her cousin's observations in some respects, though she could not help thinking, that love had as much to say in her case as in most others; for if it did not blind her to her lover's

aults, it certainly made her much more tolerant of them.

Edward was, in truth, at times, almost provokingly boyish and unthinking, and possessed a flow of animal spirits as inexhaustible as they were sometimes overpowering; but she flattered herself time would subdue them to a more rational tone: and she longed for his having the advantages of Colonel Lennox's society—not by way of pattern, as Lady Emily expressed it, but that he might be gradually led to something of more refinement, from holding intercourse with a superior mind. And she obtained her wish sooner than she had dared to hope for it. That battle was fought which decided the fate of Europe, and turned so many swords into plough-shares; and Mary seemed now touching the pinnacle of happiness, when she saw her lover restored to her. He had gained additional renown in the bloody field of Waterloo; and, more fortunate than others, his military career

had terminated both gloriously and happily.

If Mary had ever distrusted the reality of his affection, all her doubts were now at an end. She saw she was beloved with all the truth and ardour of a noble ingenuous mind, too upright to deceive others, too enlightened to deceive itself. All reserve betwixt them was now at an end; and, secure in mutual affection, nothing seemed to oppose itself to their happiness.

Colonel Lennox's fortune was small; but, such as it was, it seemed sufficient for all the purposes of rational enjoyment. Both were aware, that wealth is a relative thing, and that the positively rich are not those who have the largest possessions, but those who have the fewest vain or selfish desires to gratify. From these they were happily exempt. Both possessed too many resources in their own minds to require the stimulus of spending money to rouse them into enjoyment, or give them additional importance in the eyes of the world: and,

above all, both were too thoroughly Christian in their principles, to murmur at any sacrifices or privations they might have to endure in the course of their earthly pilgrimage.

But Lady Juliana's weak, worldly mind, saw things in a very different light; and when Colonel Lennox, as a matter of form, applied to her for her consent to their union, he received a positive and angry refusal. She declared she never would consent to any daughter of her's making so foolish, so very unsuitable a marriage. And, then sending for Mary, she charged her, in the most peremptory manner, to break off all intercourse with Colonel Lennox.

Poor Mary was overwhelmed with grief and amazement at this new display of her mother's tyranny and injustice, and used all the powers of reasoning and entreaty to alter her sentiments; but in vain. Since Adelaide's elopement, Lady Juliana had been much in want of some subject to oc-

cupy her mind—something to excite a sensation, and give her something to complain of, and talk about, and put her in a bustle, and make her angry, and alarmed, and ill-used, and, in short, all the things which a fool is fond of being.

Although Mary had little hopes of being able to prevail by any efforts of reason, she yet tried to make her mother comprehend the nature of her engagement with Colonel Lennox as of a sacred nature, and too binding ever to be dissolved. But Lady Juliana's wrath blazed forth with redoubled violence at the very mention of an engagement. She had never heard of any thing so improper. Colonel Lennox must be a most unprincipled man to lead her daughter into an engagement unsanctioned by her; and she had acted in the most improper manner in allowing herself to form an attachment without the consent of those who had the best title to dispose of her. The person who could act thus was not fit to be trust-

ed, and in future it would be necessary for her to have her constantly under her own eye.

Mary found her candour had therefore only reduced her to the alternative of either openly rebelling, or of submitting to be talked at, and watched, and guarded, as if she had been detected in carrying on some improper clandestine intercourse. But she submitted to all the restrictions that were imposed, and the torments that were inflicted, if not with the heroism of a martyr, at least with the meekness of one ; for no murmur escaped her lips. She was only anxious to conceal from others the extent of her mother's folly and injustice, and took every opportunity of entreating Colonel Lennox's silence and forbearance. It required, indeed, all her influence, to induce him to submit patiently to the treatment he experienced. Lady Juliana had so often repeated to Mary that it was the greatest presumption in Colonel Lennox to

aspire to a daughter of hers, that she had fairly talked herself into the belief that he was all she asserted him to be—a man of neither birth nor fortune—certainly a Scotsman, from his name—consequently having thousands of poor cousins, and vulgar relations of every description. And she was determined that no daughter of hers should every marry a man whose family connections she knew nothing about. She had suffered a great deal too much from her (Mary's) father's low relations ever to run the risk of any thing of the same kind happening again. In short, she at length made it out clearly to her own satisfaction, that Colonel Lennox was scarcely a gentleman ; and she therefore considered it as her duty to treat him, on every occasion, with the most marked rudeness. Colonel Lennox pitied her folly too much to be hurt by her ill-breeding and malevolence; but he could scarcely reconcile it to his notions of duty, that Mary's superior mind

should submit to the thraldom of one who evidently knew not good from evil.

Lady Emily was so much engrossed by her own affairs, that, for some time, all this went on unnoticed by her. At length, she was struck with Mary's dejection, and observed that Colonel Lennox seemed also dispirited; but, imputing it to a lover's quarrel, she laughingly taxed them with it. Although Mary could suppress the cause of her uneasiness, she was too ingenuous to deny it; and, being pressed by her cousin, she at length disclosed to her the cause of her sorrow.

"Colonel Lennox and you have behaved like two fools," said she, at the end of her cousin's communication. "What could possibly instigate you to so absurd an act as that of asking Lady Juliana's consent? You surely might have known, that the person who is never consulted about any thing will invariably start difficulties to every thing; and that people, who are never accustomed to be even listened to, get

quite unmanageable when appealed to. Lady Juliana gave an immediate assent to Lord Glenallan's proposals, because she was the first person consulted about them; and, besides, she had a sort of an instinctive knowledge that it would create a sensation and make her of consequence—in short, she was to act in a sort of triple capacity, as parent, lover, and bride. Here, on the contrary, she was aware that her consent would stand as a mere cipher, and, once given, would never be more heard of. Liberty of opinion is a latitude many people quite lose themselves in. When once they attempt to think, it makes confusion worse confounded: so it is much better to take that labour off their hands, and settle the matter for them. It would have been quite time enough to have asked Lady Juliana's consent after the thing was over; or, at any rate, the minute before it was to take place. I would not even have allowed her time for a flood of tears, or a fit of hyste-

rics. And now, that your duty has brought you to this, even my genius is at a loss how to extricate you. Gretna Green might have been adviseable, and that would have accorded with your notions of duty; that would have been following your mamma's own footsteps; but it is become too vulgar an exploit. I read of a hatter's apprentice having carried off a grocer's heiress t'other day—What do you purpose doing yourself?"

"To try the effect of patience and submission," said Mary, "rather than openly set at defiance one of the most sacred duties—the obedience of a child to a parent. Besides, I could not possibly be happy were I to marry under such circumstances."

"You have much too nice a consience," said Lady Emily, "and yet I could scarcely wish you otherwise than you are. What an angel you are, to behave as you do to such a mother; with such sweetness, and gentleness, and even respect! Ah! they

know little of human nature, who think that to perform great actions one most necessarily be a great character. So far from that, I now see, there may be much more real greatness of mind displayed in the quiet tenor of a woman's life, than in the most brilliant exploits that ever were performed by man. Methinks, I myself could help to storm a city ; but to rule my own spirit, is a task beyond me. What a pity it is you and I cannot change places. Here am I, languishing for a little opposition to my love. My marriage will be quite an insipid, every-day affair : I yawn already to think of it. Can any thing be more disheartening to a young couple, anxious to signalize their attachment in the face of the whole world, than to be allowed to take their own way ? Conceive my vexation at being told by papa this morning, that he had not the least objection to Edward and me marrying whenever we pleased, although he thought we might both have

done better; but that was our own affair, not his. That he thought Edward a fine, good humoured fellow—excessively amusing—hoped he would get a ship some day, although he had no interest whatever in the admiralty—was sorry he could not give us any money, but hoped we should remain at Beech Park as long as we liked. I really feel quite flat with all these dull affirmations."

"What! you had rather have been locked up in a tower—wringing your hands at the height of the windows, the thickness of the walls, and so forth," said Mary.

"No: I should never have done any thing so like a washerwoman, as to wring my hands; though I might, like some heroines, have fallen to work in a regular blacksmith-way, by examining the lock of the door, and, perhaps, have succeeded in picking it; but, alas! I live in degenerate days. Oh! that I had been born the persecuted daughter of some ancient Baron

bold, instead of the spoiled child of a good natured modern Earl! Heavens! to think that I must tamely, abjectly submit to be married in the presence of all my family, even in the very parish church! Oh, what detractions from the brilliancy of my star!"

In spite of her levity, Lady Emily was seriously interested in her cousin's affairs, and tried every means of obtaining Lady Juliana's consent: but Lady Juliana was become more unmanageable than ever. Her temper, always bad, was now soured by chagrin and disappointment into something, if possible, still worse, and Lady Emily's authority had no longer any controul over her; even the threat of producing aunt Grizzy to a brilliant assembly, had now lost its effect. Dr. Redgill was the only auxiliary she possessed in the family, and he most cordially joined her in condemning Miss Mary's obstinacy and infatuation. What could she see in a man with such an insignificant bit of property, a mere nest for

blackbirds and linnets, and such sort of vermin. Not a morsel of any sort of game on his grounds; while at Glenallan, he had been credibly informed, such was the abundance, that the deer had been seen stalking, and the black cock flying, past the very door! But the Doctor's indignation was suddenly suspended by a fit of apoplexy; from which, however, he rallied, and passed it off for the present as a sort of vertigo, in consequence of the shock he had received at hearing of Miss Mary's misconduct.

At length even Colonel Lennox's forbearance was exhausted, and Mary's health and spirits were sinking beneath the conflict she had to maintain, when a sudden revolution in Lady Juliana's plans caused also a revolution in her sentiments. This was occasioned by a letter from Adelaide, now Lady Lindore: It was evidently written under the influence of melancholy and discontent; and, as Lady Emily said, no-

thing could be a stronger proof of poor Adelaide's wretchedness, than her expressing a wish that her mother should join her in the south of France, where she was going on account of her health.

Adelaide was, indeed, one of the many melancholy proofs of the effects of headstrong passions and perverted principles. Lord Lindore had married her from a point of honour; and although he possessed too much refinement to treat her ill, yet his indifference was not the less cutting to a spirit haughty as hers. Like many others, she had vainly imagined, that, in renouncing virtue itself for the man she loved, she was for ever ensuring his boundless gratitude and adoration: and she only awoke from her delusive dream, to find herself friendless in a foreign land—an outcast from society—an object of indifference, even to him for whom she had abandoned all.

But Lady Juliana would see nothing of all this: She was charmed at what she

termed this proof of her daughter's affection, in wishing to have her with her; and the prospect of going abroad seemed like a vision of paradise to her. Instant preparations were made for her departure, and in the bustle attendant on them, Mary and her affairs sunk into utter insignificance. Indeed, she seemed rather anxious to get her disposed of, in any way that might prevent her interfering with her own plans; and a consent to her marriage, such as it was, was easily obtained.

"Marry whom you please," said she; "only remember I am not responsible for the consequences. I have always told you what a wretched thing a love-marriage is, therefore you are not to blame me for your future misery."

Mary readily subscribed to the conditions; but, as she embraced her mother at parting, she timidly whispered a hope that she would ever consider her house as her home. A smile of contempt was the only

reply she received, and they parted never more to meet. Lady Juliana found foreign manners and principles too congenial to her taste, ever to return to Britain.

CHAPTER XXI.

"O most gentle Jupiter! what tedious homily of love have you wearied your parishioners withal, and never cryed, *Have patience, good people!*"

As You Like It.

THE only obstacle to her union thus removed, Mary thought she might now venture to let her aunt Grizzy into the secret; and accordingly, with some little embarrassment, she made the disclosure of the mutual attachment subsisting between Colonel Lennox and herself. Grizzy received the communication with all the astonishment which ladies usually experience, upon being

made acquainted with a marriage which they had not had the prescience to foresee and foretell—or even one which they had; for, common and natural as the event seems to be, it is one which, perhaps, in no instance ever took place, without occasioning the greatest amazement to some one individual or another; and it will also be generally found, that either the good or the bad fortune of one or other of the parties, is the subject of universal wonder. In short, a marriage which excites no surprise, pity, or indignation, must be something that has never yet been witnessed on the face of this round world. It is greatly to be feared, none of my readers will sympathise in the feelings of the good spinster on this occasion, as she poured them forth in the following *extempore* or *improvisitorial* strain:

"Well, Mary, I declare I'm perfectly confounded with all you have been telling me! I'm sure I never heard the like of it!

It seems but the t'other day since you began your sampler; and it looks just like yesterday since your father and mother were married. And such a work as there was at your nursing! I'm sure your poor grandfather was out of all patience about it. And now to think that you are going to be married! not but what it's a thing we all expected, for there's no doubt England's the place for young women to get husbands—we always said that, you know: Not but what I daresay you might have been married, if you had staid in the Highlands, and to a real Highlander, too, which, of course, would have been still better for us all; for it will be a sad thing if you are obliged to stay in England, Mary; but I hope there's no chance of that: You know, Colonel Lennox can easily sell his place, and buy an estate in the Highlands. There's a charming property, I know, to be sold just now, that *marches* with Glenfern. To be sure it's on the

wrong side of the hill--there's no denying that; but then, there's I can't tell you how many thousand acres of fine muir for shooting, and I daresay Colonel Lennox is a keen sportsman; and they say, a great deal of it might be very much improved. We must really inquire after it, Mary, and you must speak to Colonel Lennox about it, for you know such a property as that may be snapped up in a minute."

Mary assented to all that was said; and Grizzy proceeded—

"I wonder you never brought Colonel Lennox to see us, Mary: I'm sure he must think it very odd. To be sure, Sir Sampson's situation is some excuse; but, at any rate, I wonder you never spoke about him. We all found out your aunt Bella's attachment from the very first, just from her constantly speaking about Major M'Tavish and the militia; and we had a good guess of Betsy's too, from the day her face turned so red after giving Captain

M'Nab for her toast; but you have really kept your's very close, for, I declare, I never once suspected such a thing. I wonder if that was Colonel Lennox that I saw you part with at the door one day: tall, and with brown hair, and a blue coat. I asked Lady M'Laughlan if she knew who it was, and she said it was Admiral Benbow; but I think she must have been mistaken, for I daresay, now, it was just Colonel Lennox. Lennox—I'm sure I should be able to remember something about somebody of that name; but my memory's not so good as it used to be, for I have so many things, you know, to think about, with Sir Sampson, that, I declare, sometimes my head's quite confused; yet I think always there's something about them. I wish to goodness Lady M'Laughlan was come from the dentist's, that I might consult her about it; for, of course, Mary, you'll do nothing without consulting all your friends: I know you've too much sense for that. And here's

Sir Sampson coming; it will be a fine piece of news to tell him."

Sir Sampson having been now wheeled in by the still active Philistine, and properly arranged, with the assistance of Miss Grizzy, she took her usual station by the side of his easy chair, and began to shout into his ear.

"Here's my neice Mary, Sir Sampson; you remember her when she was little, I daresay—you know you used to call her the fairy of Lochmarlie; and I'm sure we all thought for long she would have been a perfect fairy, she was so little; but she's tall enough now, you see, and she's going to be married to a fine young man—none of us know him yet, but I think I must have seen him; and, at any rate, I'm to see him to-morrow, and you will see him too, Sir Sampson, for Mary is to bring him to call here, and he'll tell you all about the battle of Waterloo, and the Highlanders; for he's half a Highlander too, and I'm certain he'll

buy the Dhuanbog estate; and then when my niece Mary marries Colonel Lennox—"

"Lennox!" repeated Sir Sampson, his little dim eyes kindling at the name—"Who talks of Lennox?—I—I won't suffer it.—Where's my Lady?—Lennox!—he's a scoundrel!—you shan't marry a Lennox!"—Turning to Grizzy, "Call Philistine, and my Lady." And his agitation was so great, that even Grizzy, although accustomed for forty years to witness similar ebullitions, became alarmed.

"You see it's all for fear of my marrying," whispered she to Mary: "I'm sure such a disinterested attachment, it's impossible for me ever to repay it!"

Then turning to Sir Sampson, she sought to sooth his perturbation by oft-repeated assurances, that it was not her but her niece Mary that was going to be married to Colonel Lennox: But in vain; Sir Sampson quivered, and panted, and muttered; and the louder Grizzy screamed out the

truth, the more his irritation increased. Recourse was now had to Philistine; and Mary, thoroughly ashamed of the *eclat* attending the disclosure of her secret, and finding she could be of no use, stole away in the midst of Miss Grizzy's endless *verbiage;* but as she descended the stairs, she still heard the same assurance resounding—"I can assure you, Sir Sampson, it's not me, but my niece Mary that's going to be married to Colonel Lennox," &c.

On returning to Beech Park, she said nothing of what had passed either to Lady Emily or Colonel Lennox—aware of the amusement it would furnish to both; and she felt that her aunt required all the dignity with which she could invest her, before presenting her to her future nephew. The only delay to her marriage now rested with herself; but she was desirous it should take place under the roof which had sheltered her infancy, and sanctioned by the presence of those whom she had ever

regarded as her parents. Lady Emily, Colonel Lennox, and her brother had, all endeavoured to combat this resolution, but in vain: and it was therefore settled, that she should remain to witness the union of her brother and her cousin, and then return to Lochmarlie. But all Mary's preconceived plans were threatened with a downfall, by the receipt of the following letter from Miss Jackey:

"*Glenfern Castle,——shire,*
June 19, 181–.

It *is* impossible for *language* to express to *you* the *shame*, grief, amazement, and *indignation*, with *which* we are *all* filled at the distressing, the *ignominious* disclosure that has *just* taken *place* concerning you, *through* our most *excellent* friend Miss P. M'Pry. Oh, Mary, *how* have you *deceived* us all!!! What a *dagger* have *you* plunged into *all* our hearts! Your *poor* aunt *Grizzy!* how my *heart* bleeds *for* her! What a

difficult part *has* she to act! and at her *time* of life! with her acute *feelings!* with her devoted *attachment* to the *house* of M'Laughlan! What a *blow!* and a *blow* from your *hand!* Oh, Mary, I *must* again repeat, how *have* you deceived us *all!!!* Yet *do* not imagine I mean to *reproach* you! Much, much of the blame is *doubtless* imputable to the errors of *your* education! At the *same* time, even these *offer* no justification of your *conduct* upon the present occasion! You are now (I lament to say it!) *come* to that time of *life* when *you* ought to know *what* is right; or, where you entertain *any* doubts, you ought *most* unquestionably to *apply* to those *who*, you *may* be certain, *are* well qualified to direct you. *But*, instead *of* that, you have *pursued* a diametrically opposite *plan:* a plan which *might* have *ended* in your destruction! Oh, Mary, *I* cannot too *often* repeat, how have *you* deceived us all!!! From no *lips* but those of Miss M'Pry *would* I have believed *what*

I have heard, videlicet, that you (oh, Mary!) have for many, many months *past*, been carrying on a clandestine *correspondence* with a *young* man, unknown, unsuspected by *all* your friends here! and that *young* man, the very *last* man on the face of the *earth* whom you, or any of *us*, ought to have given our countenance *to!* The very man, in *short*, whom we were all *bound*, by every *principle* of duty, gratitude, and esteem, to have shunned, and who you are *bound*, from this *moment*, to renounce for ever. How you ever *came* to be acquainted *with* Colonel Charles Lennox of Rose Hall, is a mystery none of us can fathom; but surely the person, *whoever* it was that *brought* it about, has much, *much* to answer for! Mrs. Douglas (to whom I *thought* it proper to *make* an immediate *communication* on the subject) pretends to *have* been well informed of all that has *been* going on, and even insists that *your* acquaintance *with* the Lennox family *took*

place through Lady M'Laughlan! *But* that we *all* know to be *morally* impossible. Lady M'Laughlan is the *very* last person in the *world* who would have *introduced* you, or any *young* creature for whom she had the *slightest* regard, to a Lennox, the *mortal enemy of the M'Laughlan race!* I most *sincerely* trust she is spared the *shock* we have all experienced at this painful *disclosure*. With her *high* principles, and *great* regard for us, I tremble to think *what* might be the consequences! And dear Sir Sampson, in his delicate state, how *would* he ever be able to *stand* such a blow! and a blow, too, from your *hand*, Mary! you, who he *was* always *like* a father to! *Many* a time, I am sure, *have* you sat upon his *knee;* and you certainly *cannot* have forgot the *elegant* Shetland poney he presented you *with* the day you was five *years* old! and *what* a return for such favours!

But I fondly trust it *is* not yet too late. You have *only* to give up this unworthy at-

tachment, and all *will* be forgotten and *forgiven;* and we will all receive you as if *nothing* had happened. Oh, Mary! I must, for the last *time* repeat, how have you deceived us *all!!*

I am your *distressed* aunt,

JOAN DOUGLAS."

"P. S. I conclude abruptly, in *order* to leave *room* for your aunt Nicky to *state* her sentiments also on this *most* afflicting subject."

Nicky's appendix was as follows:

"DEAR MARY,

Jacky has read her letter to us. It is most excellent. We are all much affected by it. Not a word but deserves to be printed. I can add nothing. You see, if you marry Colonel L. none of us can be at your marriage. How could we? I hope you will think twice about it. Second

thoughts are best. What's done cannot be undone.

Yours,

N. D."

Mary felt somewhat in the situation of the sleeper awakened, as she perused these mysterious anathemas; and rubbed her eyes more than once, in hopes of dispelling the mist that she thought must needs be upon them. But in vain: it seemed only to increase with every effort she made to remove it. Not a single ray of light fell on the palpable obscure of Miss Jacky's composition, that could enable her to penetrate the dark profound that encompassed her. She was aware, indeed, that when her aunt meant to be pathetic or energetic, she always had recourse to the longest and the strongest words she could possibly lay her hands upon; and Mary had been well accustomed to hear her childish faults and juvenile indiscretions denounced, in the most awful

terms, as crimes of the deepest dye. Many an exordium she had listened to, on the tearing of her frock, or the losing of her glove, that might have served as a preface to the Newgate Calendar, Colquhoun on the Police, or any other register of crimes. Still she had always been able to detect some clue to her own misdeeds; but here even conjecture was baffled, and in vain she sought for some resting place for her imagination, in the probable misdemeanour of her lover. But even allowing all possible latitude for Jacky's pen, she was forced to acknowledge there must be some ground for her aunt to build upon. Superficial as her structures generally were, like children's card-houses, they had always something to rest upon; though (unlike them) her creations were invariably upon a gigantic scale.

Mary had often reflected with surprise, that, although Lady Maclaughlan had been the person to introduce her to Mrs. Lennox, no intercourse had taken place be-

tween the families themselves; and when she had mentioned them to each other, Mrs. Lennox had only sighed, and Lady Maclaughlan had humphed. She despaired of arriving at the knowledge of the truth from her aunts. Grizzy's brain was a mere wisp of contradictions; and Jacky's mind was of that violent hue, that cast its own shade upon every object that came in contact with it. To mention the matter to Colonel Lennox was only to make her relations ridiculous; and, in short, although it was a formidable step, the result of her deliberation was to go to Lady Maclaughlan, and request a solution of her aunt's dark sayings. She therefore departed for Milsom Street, and, upon entering the drawing-room, found Grizzy alone, and evidently in even more than usual perturbation.

"Oh, Mary!" cried she, as her niece entered, "I'm sure, I'm thankful you're come. I was just wishing for you. You can't think how much mischief your yesterday's

visit has done. It's a thousand pities, I declare, that ever you said a word about your marriage to Sir Sampson. But, of course, I don't mean to blame you, Mary. You know you couldn't help it; so don't vex yourself, for you know that will not make the thing any better now. Only if Sir Sampson should die—to be sure I must always think it was you that killed him; and I'm sure that will soon kill me too—such a friend—Oh, Mary!" Here a burst of grief choked poor Miss Grizzy's utterance.

"My dear aunt," said Mary, "you certainly must be mistaken. Sir Sampson seems to retain no recollection of me. It is therefore impossible that I could cause him any pain or agitation."

"O certainly!" said Grizzy. "There's no doubt Sir Sampson has quite forgot you, Mary—and no wonder—with your being so long away; but I daresay he'll come to know you yet. But I'm sure, I hope to goodness he'll never know you as Mrs.

Lennox, Mary. That would break his heart altogether; for you know the Lennoxes have always been the greatest enemies of the Maclaughlans,—and, of course, Sir Sampson can't bear any body of the name, which is quite natural. And it was very thoughtless in me to have forgot that, till Philistine put me in mind of it, and poor Sir Sampson has had a very bad night; so I'm sure, I hope, Mary, you'll never think any more about Colonel Lennox: and, take my word for it, you'll get plenty of husbands yet. Now, since there's a peace, there will be plenty of fine young officers coming home. There's young Balquhadan, a captain, I know, in some regiment; and there's Dhalahulish, and Lochgrunason, and ——" But Miss Grizzy's ideas here shot out into so many ramifications upon the different branches of the county tree, that it would be in vain for any but a true Celt to attempt to follow her.

Mary again tried to lead her back to the

subject of the Lennoxes, in hopes of being able to extract some spark of knowledge from the dark chaos of her brain.

"O, I'm sure, Mary, if you want to hear about that, I can tell you plenty about the Lennoxes; or, at any rate, about the Maclaughlans, which is the same thing. But I must first find my huswife."

To save Miss Grizzy's reminiscences, a few words will suffice to clear up the mystery. A family feud, of remote origin, had long subsisted between the families of Lennox and Maclaughlan, which had been carefully transmitted from father to son, till the hereditary brand had been deposited in the breast of Sir Sampson. By the death of many intervening heirs, General Lennox, then a youth, was next in succession to the Maclaughlan estate; but the power of alienating it was vested in Sir Sampson, as the last remaining heir of the entail. By the mistaken zeal of their friends, both were, at

an early period, placed in the same regiment, in the hope that constant association together would quickly destroy their mutual prejudices, and produce a reconciliation. But the inequalities were too great ever to assimilate. Sir Sampson possessed a large fortune, a deformed person, and a weak, vain, irritable mind. General (then Ensign) Lennox had no other patrimony than his sword—a handsome person, high spirit, and dauntless courage. With these tempers, it may easily be conceived that a thousand trifling events occurred to keep alive the hereditary animosity. Sir Sampson's vain, narrow mind, expected from his poor kinsman a degree of deference and respect, which the other, so far from rendering, rather sought opportunities of shewing his contempt, and of thwarting and ridiculing him upon every occasion, till Sir Sampson was obliged to quit the regiment. From that time it was understood, that all bearing the name of Lennox were for ever ex-

cluded from the succession to the Maclaughlan estates; and it was deemed a sort of petty treason even to name the name of a Lennox in presence of this dignified chieftain.

Many years had worn away, and Sir Sampson had passed through the various modifications of human nature, from the "mewling infant" to "mere oblivion," without having become either wiser or better. His mind remained the same—irascible and vindictive to the last. Lady Maclaughlan had too much sense to attempt to reason or argue him out of his prejudices, but she contrived to prevent him from ever executing a new entail. She had known and esteemed both General and Mrs. Lennox before her marriage with Sir Sampson, and she was too firm and decided in her predilections ever to abandon them; and, while she had the credit of sharing in all her husband's animosity, she was silently protecting the lawful rights of those who

had long ceased to consider them as such. General Lennox had always understood that he and his family were under Sir Sampson's *ban*, and he possessed too high a spirit ever to express a regret, or even allude to the circumstances. It had therefore made a very faint impression on the minds of any of his family; and in the long lapse of years, had been almost forgot by Mrs. Lennox, till recalled by Lady Maclaughlan's letter. But she had been silent on the subject to Mary; for she could not conceal from herself that her husband had been to blame—that the heat and violence of his temper had often led him to provoke and exasperate where mildness and forbearance would have soothed and conciliated, without detracting from his dignity; but her gentle heart shrunk from the task of unnecessarily disclosing the faults of the man she had loved; and when she heard Mary talk with rapture of the wild beauties of Lochmarlie, she had only sighed to think

that the pride and prejudice of others had alienated the inheritance of her son.

But all this Mary was still in ignorance of, for Miss Grizzy had gone completely astray in the attempt to trace the rise and progress of the Lennox and Maclaughlan feud. Happily, Lady Maclaughlan's entrance extricated her from her labyrinth, as it was the signal for her to repair to Sir Sampson. Mary, in some little confusion, was beginning to express to her Ladyship her regret at hearing that Sir Sampson had been so unwell, when she was stopped.

"My dear child, don't learn to tell lies. You don't care twopence for Sir Sampson. I know all. You are going to be married to Charles Lennox. I'm glad of it. I wished you to marry him. Whether you'll thank me for that twenty years hence, *I* can't tell—*you* can't tell—*he* can't tell—God knows—humph! Your aunts will tell you he is Beelzebub, because his father said he could make a Sir Sampson out of a mouldy

lemon. Perhaps he could. I don't know—but your aunts are fools. You know what fools are, and so do I. There are plenty of fools in the world; but if they had not been sent for some wise purpose, they wouldn't have been here; and since they are here, they have as good a right to have elbow-room in the world as the wisest. Sir Sampson hated General Lennox, because he laughed at him; and if Sir Sampson had lived a hundred years ago, his hatred might have been a fine thing to talk about now. It is the same passion that makes heroes of your De Montforts, and your Manuels, and your Corsairs, and all the rest of them; but they wore cloaks and daggers, and these are the supporters of hatred. Every body laughs at the hatred of a little old man in a cocked hat—You may laugh too. So now God bless you! Continue as you are, and marry the man you like, though the world should set its teeth against you. 'Tis not every woman can be trusted to do that—

farewell!" And with a cordial salute they parted.

Mary was too well accustomed to Lady Maclaughlan's style, not to comprehend that her marriage with Colonel Lennox was an event she had long wished for, and now most warmly sanctioned; and she hastened home to convey the glad tidings, in a letter, to her aunts, though doubtful if the truth itself would be able to pierce its way through their prejudices.

Another stroke of palsy soon rendered Sir Sampson unconscious even to the charms of Grizzy's conversation, and as she was no longer of use to him, and was evidently at a loss how to employ herself, Mary proposed that she should accompany her back to Lochmarlie, to which she yielded a joyful assent. Once convinced of Lady Maclaughlan's approbation of her niece's marriage, she could think and talk of nothing else.

Some wise individuals have thought, that most people act from the inspiration of either a good or an evil power : to which class Miss Grizzy belonged, would have puzzled the most profound metaphysician to determine. She was, in fact, a Maclaughlanite ; but to find the *root* of Maclaughlan is another difficulty—thought is lost.

Colonel Lennox, although a little startled at his first introduction to his future aunt, soon came to understand the *naïveté* of her character ; and his enlarged mind, and good temper, made such ample allowance for her weaknesses, that she protested, with tears in her eyes, she never knew the like of him—she never could think enough of him. She wished to goodness Sir Sampson was himself again, and could only see him, she was sure he would think just as she did, &c. &c. &c.

The day of Lady Emily's marriage arrived, and found her in a more serious

mood than she had hitherto appeared in; though it seemed doubtful, whether it was most occasioned by her own prospects, or the thoughts of parting with Mary, who, with aunt Grizzy, was to set off for Lochmarlie immediately after witnessing the ceremony. Edward and his bride would fain have accompanied her; but Lord Courtland was too much accustomed to his daughter, and amused by his nephew, to bear their absence, and they therefore yielded the point, though with reluctance.

"This is all for want of a little opposition to have braced my nerves," said Lady Emily, as she dropped a few tears. "I verily believe I should have wept outright, had I not happily descried Dr. Redgill shrugging his shoulders at me; that has given a fillip to my spirits. After all, 'tis perhaps a foolish action I've committed. The icy bonds of matrimony are upon me already: I feel myself turning into a fond, faithful, rational, humble, meek-spirited

wife! Alas! I must now turn my head into a museum, and hang up all my smart sayings inside my brain, there to petrify, as warnings to all pert misses. Dear Mary! if ever I am good for any thing, it will be to you I owe it!"

Mary could only embrace her cousin in silence, as she parted from her brother and her with the deepest emotion, and, assisted by Colonel Lennox, (who was to follow,) took her station by the side of her aunt.

"I wish you a pleasant journey, Miss Mary," cried Dr. Redgill. "The game season is coming on, and——:" But the carriage drove off, and the rest of the sentence was dispersed by the wind; and all that could be collected was, "grouse always acceptable—friends at a distance—roebuck stuffed with heather carries well at all times," &c. &c.

To one less practised in her ways, and less gifted with patience, the eternal babbling of aunt Grizzy as a travelling com-

panion would have occasioned considerable *ennui*, if not spleen. There are, perhaps, few greater trials of temper, than that of travelling with a person who thinks it necessary to be *actively pleasant*, without a moment's intermission, from the rising till the setting sun. Grizzy was upon this fatal plan, the rock of thousands! Silence she thought synonymous with low spirits, and she talked, and wondered, and exclaimed incessantly, and assured Mary she need not be uneasy, she was certain Colonel Lennox would follow very soon; she had not the least doubt of that. She would not be surprised if he was to be at Lochmarlie almost as soon as themselves; at any rate, very soon after them.

But even these little torments were forgot by Mary, when she found herself again in her native land. The hills, the air, the waters, the people, even the *peat-stacks*, had a charm that touched her heart, and brought tears into her eyes as they pic-

tured home. But her feelings arose to rapture when Lochmarlie burst upon her view, in all the grandeur, beauty, and repose of a setting sun, shedding its farewell rays of gold and purple, and tints of such matchless hue, as no pencil ere can imitate—no poet's pen describe. Rocks, woods, hills, and waters, all shone with a radiance that seemed of more than earthly beauty, "Oh, there are moments in life, keen, blissful, never to be forgotten!" and such was the moment to Mary when the carriage stopped, and she again heard the melody of that voice familiar from infancy—and looked on the face known with her being—and was pressed to that heart where glowed a parent's love!

When Mary recovered from the first almost *agonizing* transports of joy, she marked, with delight, the increased animation and cheerfulness visible in Mrs. Douglas. All the livilier feelings of her warm heart had, indeed, been excited and brought into ac-

tion, by the spirit and playfulness of her little boy, and the increased happiness of her husband; while all her uneasiness respecting her former lover was now at an end. She had heard from himself that he had married, and was happy. Without being guilty of inconstancy, such are the effects of time upon mutable human nature!

Colonel Lennox lost no time in arriving to claim his promised bride; and Mary's happiness was complete, when she found her own choice so warmly approved of by the friends she loved.

The three aunts, and their unmarried nieces, now the sole inhabitants of Glenfern Castle, were not quite decided in their opinions at first. Miss Jacky looked with a suspicious eye upon the *mortal enemy of the Maclaughlan race*; but, upon better acquaintance, his gaiety and good humour contrived to charm asleep even her good sense and prejudices, and she pronounced

him to be a pleasant, well informed young man, who gave himself no airs, although he certainly had rather a high look.

Nicky doubted, from his appearance, that he would be nice, and she had no patience with nice men; but Nicky's fears vanished, when she saw, as she expressed it, "how pleasantly he ate the sheep's head, although he had never seen one in his life before."

The younger ladies thought Captain M'Nab had a finer complexion, and wondered whether Colonel Lennox (like him,) would be dressed in full regimentals at his marriage.

But, alas! "all earthly good still blends itself with harm," for on the day of Mary's marriage—a day consecrated to mirth, and bride-cake, and wedding favours, and marriage presents, and good cheer, and reels, and revelry and bagpipes—on that very day, when the marriage ceremony was scarcely over, arrived the accounts of the

death of Sir Sampson Maclaughlan! But on this joyous day, even Grizzy's tears did not flow so freely as they would have done at another time; and she declared, that although it was impossible any body could feel more than she did, yet certainly it would not be using Colonel and Mrs. Lennox well, to be very distressed upon such an occasion; and there was no doubt but she would have plenty of time to be sorry about it yet, when they were all sitting quietly by themselves, with nothing else in their heads; though, to be sure, they must always think what a blessing it was that Colonel Lennox was to succeed.

"I wish he may ever fill Sir Sampson's shoes!" said Miss Nicky, with a sigh.

"Colonel Lennox cannot propose a better model to himself than Sir Sampson Maclaughlan," said Miss Jacky: "He has left him a noble example of propriety, frugality, hospitality, and respectability; and,

above all, of forgivenesss of his mortal enemies."

"Oh, Mary!" exclaimed Miss Grizzy, as they were about to part with their niece: "What a lucky creature you are! Never, I am sure, did any young person set out in life with such advantages. To think of your succeeding to Lady Maclaughlan's laboratory, all so nicely fitted up with every kind of thing, and especially plenty of the most charming bark, which, I'm sure, will do Colonel Lennox the greatest good, as you know all officers are much the better of bark. I know it was the saving of young Ballingall's life, when he came home in an ague from some place; and I'm certain Lady Maclaughlan will leave you every thing that is there, you was always such a favourite. Not but what I must always think that you had a hand in dear Sir Sampson's death. Indeed, I have no doubt of it. Yet, at the same time, I don't mean to blame you in the least; for I'm certain, if Sir

Sampson had been spared, he would have been delighted, as we all are, at your marriage."

Colonel and Mrs. Lennox agreed in making choice of Lochmarlie for their future residence; and, in a virtuous attachment, they found as much happiness as earth's pilgrims ever possess, whose greatest felicity must spring from a higher source. The extensive influence which generally attends upon virtue joined to prosperity, was used by them for its best purposes. It was not confined either to rich or poor, to cast or sect; but all shared in their benevolence whom that benevolence could benefit. And the poor, the sick, and the desolate, united in blessing what Heaven had already blessed—this happy Marriage.

FINIS.

C. Stewart, Printer, Edinburgh.